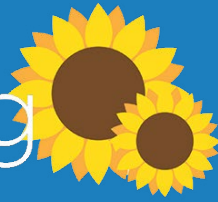


ExcelFostering
making tomorrow a brighter day



The journey Chloe of and Chris



**YOURS
TO
KEEP!**

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Draw yourself here!



Hi, we are **Chloe** and **Chris** and we live in foster care. We've heard that you're coming to stay for a while. If you like we can show you around...

Right now we're at the very beginning, and you might not really know what's going on, or why you're coming to stay, and that's ok, like I said, we can show you and help you.

Children come into foster care because they can't stay where they normally live, and so they come here to be looked after by a family who gives them lots of love and support. *Are you the same?*

Before we start, let's use the first page to find out about you. This is very important because this is your story too, and it means your foster carers can find out more about you and what some of your favourite



My name is _____
You can call me _____
I am ____ years old and I go to _____ school.
When I'm not at school I like to _____

My best friend is called _____ and some of my other friends are _____ and _____ We like playing games like: _____ For a special treat, I like to eat _____ and drink _____

but my favourite thing in the whole world is _____



Well done, we can fill in some more as we go along and find new things out!

The people looking after you, and making important decisions for you will be your **social workers**, **independent reviewing officers**, **Excel supervising social workers**, and of course, your Excel **foster carers**. You can talk to any of these people whilst you are in care about anything that's on your mind. Let's tell you more about them...

Social workers

Your **social worker** has a very important job, because they have to find out all about you and your favourite things, so that they can find a **foster family** who is the perfect match!

They introduce all of you and help you get to know each other, so you can settle into your new home. It is also their job to answer any questions you have - even if they're a bit difficult or you feel silly asking them.



Ok, your turn:

My **Social Worker's** name is

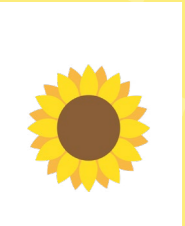
My favourite thing about them is _____

If I ever need them for anything, I can call them on this number

My **Excel Supervising Social Worker's** name is

If I need to talk I can call them on _____

My favourite thing about them is _____



Independent reviewing officers

The IRO is someone who will make sure that you are getting the best care possible. You can tell them anything and everything about being in foster care and how you feel.

They are there to understand how things are for you and they will always listen to you. They will also talk to other people, such as your social worker, parents/carers and others to find out how you are getting on in foster care.

If you have brothers and sisters in care, they will have the same Independent Reviewing Officer as you.

Draw your Social Worker or IRO here!



Their job is to make sure you are looked after by your foster carers.

Ok, your turn:

My Independent Reviewing Officer's name is _____

My favourite thing about them is _____

If I ever need them for anything, I can call them on this number _____

Brilliant.

Next up are the foster families...



Foster families



Foster families and foster carers have the most important job of all. They are the people who look after us when we can't stay at home.

Sometimes they are married, sometimes they are not and some might even have children of their own - but not all of them do! All kinds of people can become foster carers, they can be any shape, colour or size - it doesn't matter, but they all have one thing in common - they love to help children like us!

Here are some of the things that they do:

They are great at listening

They treat you as part of their family, even if they already have other children at their house, and they make you feel really important and looked after

They care about you a lot, and want the best for you

They have lots of time to spare, and will make sure that they are always there for you

They have a bedroom in their house just for you

They make you feel safe and protected

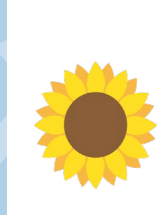
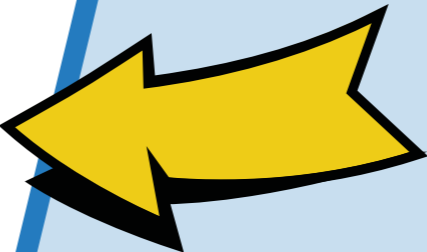
They will give you a nice warm, friendly home and all the things you need like food, clothes and stuff for school

They are very trustworthy



What is your foster family like?

Draw your new family!

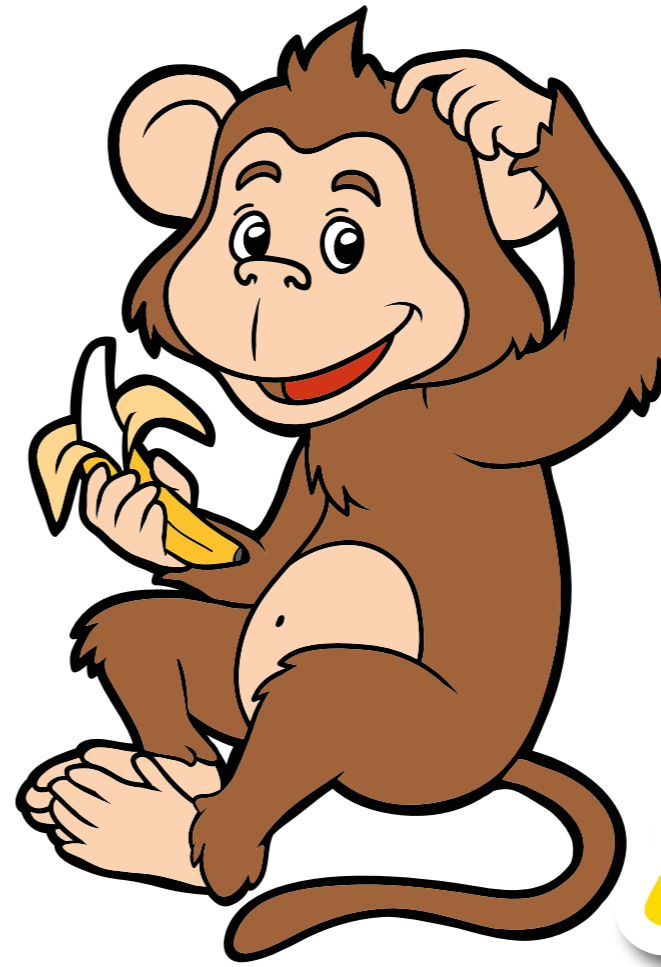
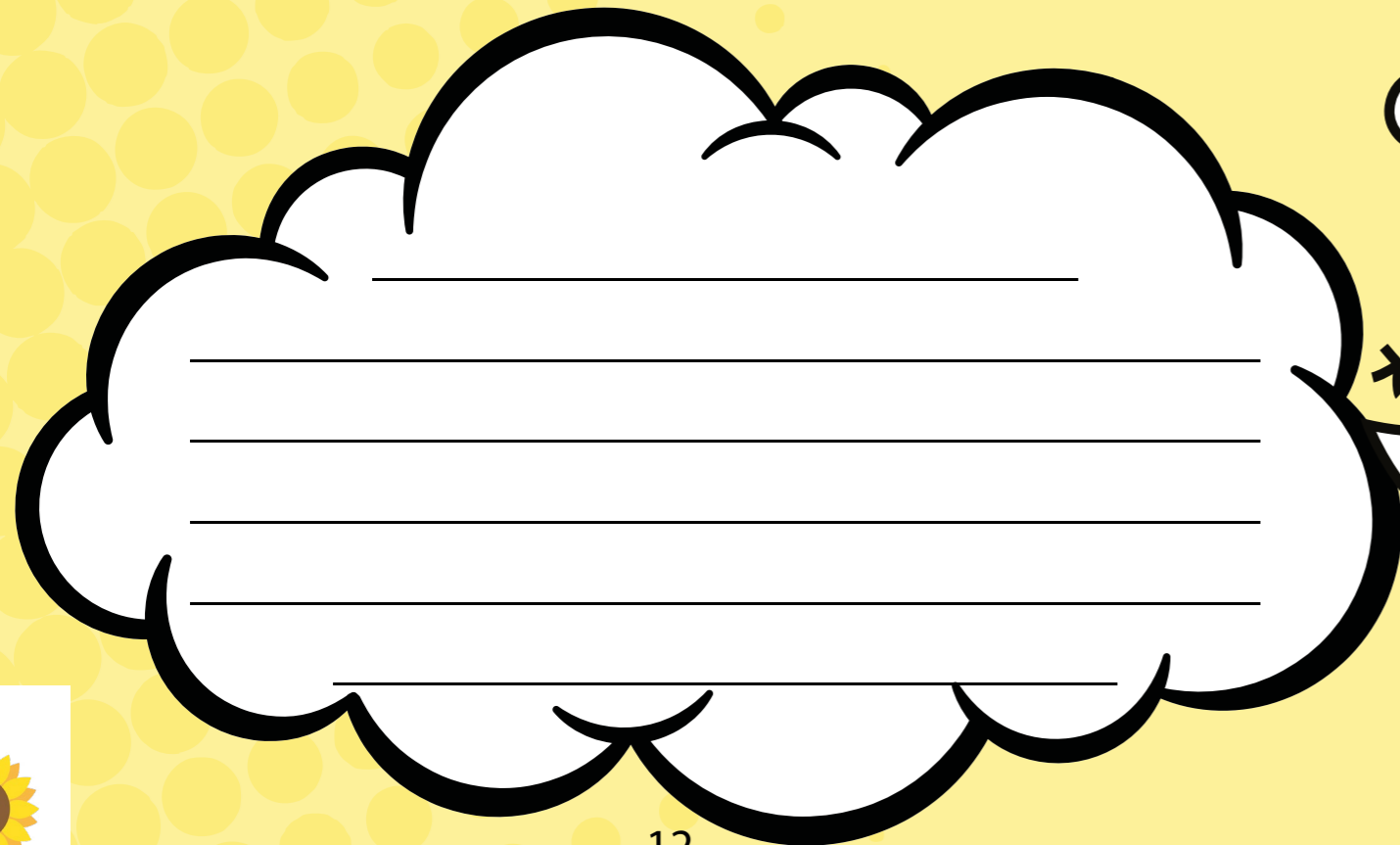


Now that we have met the most important people here, let's find out what goes on!

I'm sure you have lots of questions - we did too, and we were really scared and confused at first, but our **social workers** and **foster families** were really helpful and explained it all to us

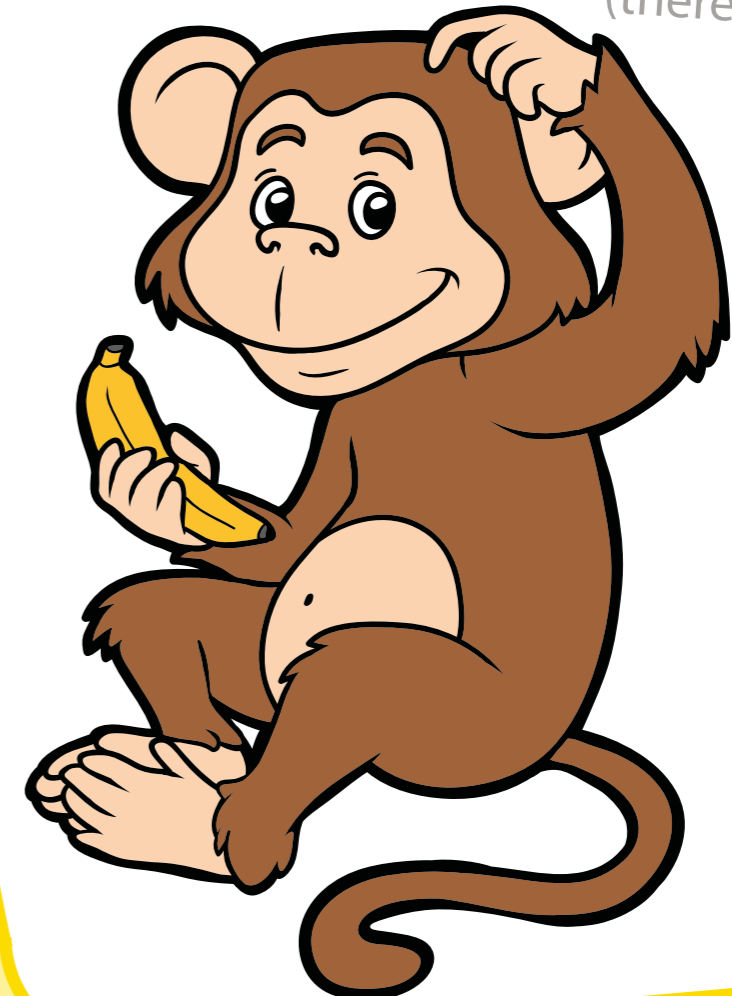
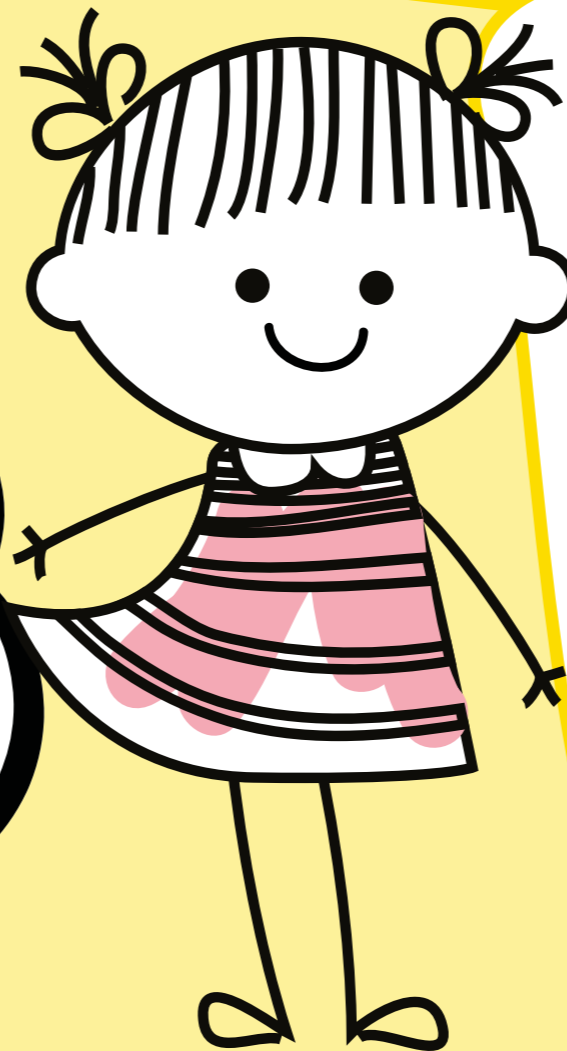
They helped us to understand why we couldn't live with our own parents. Everyone has different reasons, and some stay here for a little while, some for a long time, but everyone gets looked after and made to feel special for as long as they need.

Everyone that comes here gets given something called a 'care plan', and that's where everyone gets together and decides the best way to look after you. Please tell us what's important to help us care for you below:



Spot the difference!

(there are 5)



Everyone involved with your care knows about your care plan, and they all work together as part of a team to make sure that it goes well, and every few months or so, they come together to talk about the things that are working and the things that are not.

If you are unhappy with anything, or have changed your mind about something that you thought would be a great idea, it's ok to tell your **foster carer** or **social worker**. Care plans are like this story, we can write them as we go along.

If you have any questions or complaints you can write them down here. You can speak with your **foster carer** or **social worker** if you have anything on your mind.

If you would rather not speak to your **foster carer** or **social worker** you can call the Excel Fostering Children's Helpline. The number is **01253 712 734** or you can email them at **admin@excelfostering.com**.

There are lots of people here who care about you and how you're getting on, so if you're unhappy, it's ok to tell us - we promise you won't get into trouble

To make a formal complaint, you can take a look at our complaint policy on our website, here: <https://www.excelfostering.com/compliments-complaints>.

Write down any questions or complaints



You've done really well filling out all the information so far. I'll need your help with the next bit too if that's ok?

Please can you fill in the address and contact details for yourself and your **foster carers**. If you don't know this information you can ask your **foster carer** to help you.

My phone number at home is _____

My foster carer's mobile number is _____

My address (at my foster home) is _____

Any other contact details are: _____

Great, thanks! Now we have your contact details should we ever need them!



Help Chris find his new home!



Contact page

Excel Fostering

You can always contact the Excel team to tell us how you feel. You can send us an email, admin@excelfostering.com or call us on 01253 712 734. Whether you are feeling happy or sad, the Excel team are always ready to listen and help you.

Childline

You can call Childline to have a private conversation about anything that might be worrying you. There is no problem that is too big or too small. Their number is free to call: 0800 1111.

Ofsted

It's important that everyone at Excel does their job properly. If this is not happening or you have concerns you can let Ofsted know. Their helpline is open Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 6.00pm. You can email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk or phone about concerns on 0300 123 4666. You can also write to them: Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD



Your Rights

Your rights and views are very important. There is a Children's Commissioner who holds special responsibility for the rights of children who are in foster care like you. Their job is to improve lives for children in England.

Telephone: 020 7783 8330

Website: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

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

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline

The NSPCC is a children's charity. They support children who have been through difficulties to rebuild their lives.

They offer guidance and support and you can call them free of charge on 0800 800 500.

Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

NYAS

NYAS is an advocacy helpline for children and young people in care. If you feel like nobody is listening to you, they are there to listen and help.

You can call them on 0808 808 1001

Or email help@nyas.net

You can also send them a letter, just write Freepost NYAS on the envelope. Their website is www.nyas.net



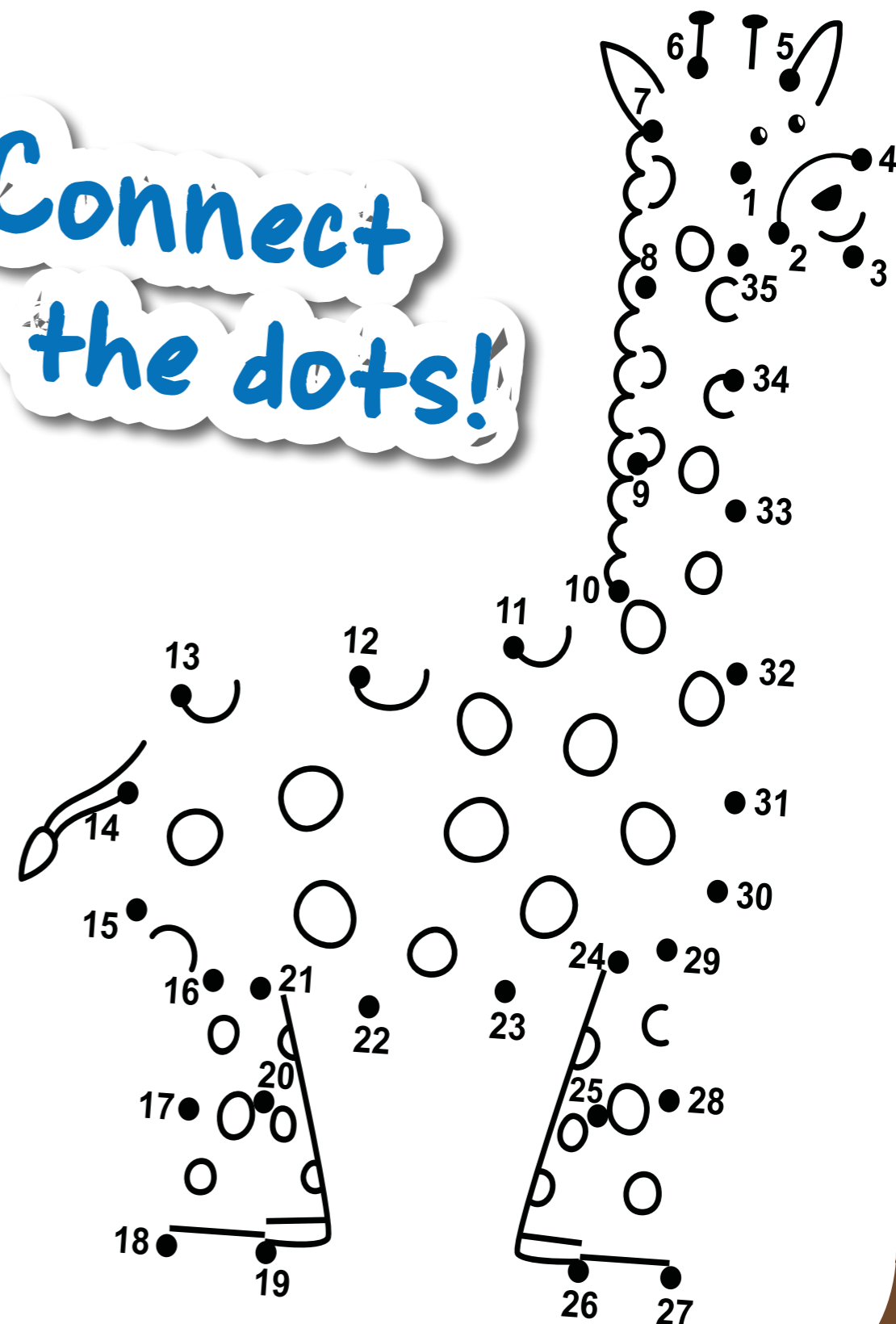
What you can expect



This part of the story tells you the things that you can expect from being in **foster care**.

- You have the right to a good standard of home life, which means that the house you live in should be comfortable
- You will be looked after properly, with things that you need such as nice food and clean clothes
- You can talk to your carer about any problems or worries that you have about school
- You get to see a doctor or a dentist whenever you need to
- Your wishes for your own family are respected and you can talk about any issues with your **foster carer** or **social worker**
- You have the right to think for yourself and have the right to tell people what you think
- You should be happy, comfortable and safe in your foster placement. If you are unhappy or unsure about anything you can speak to your **Excel Supervising Social Worker**, advocate or any other adult you trust
- You have the right to tell people your opinion, so if you have something to say or a question to ask, do not keep it to yourself - please speak out!

Connect the dots!



You might hear some pretty big words during your time in **foster care**, and just in case you don't want to ask anyone what they mean, you can have a look to see if they are here:

Dictionary

Advocate - Someone who can help children have their voice heard in meetings and support them if they have issues about their care.

Carers - Your parents, or other family members who look after you. Foster carers are people who are chosen by social services to look after you.

Children's Guardian - An independent person trained in social work, who works with children, young people, their families and others when there is a court case.

Confidential - Keeping a Confidence - Keeping something private. Your Solicitor can keep certain things you tell them private. Other professionals cannot agree to do this.

Foster Care - When a child is living with and being cared for by a family other than their own.

Foster Carers - These are the people who will look after you in their own home, with their families, providing you with shelter, food, help and care.

Foster Home - Where foster children live with their foster family.

Local Authority - The Local Authority is responsible for the local Social Services department and their Social Workers.



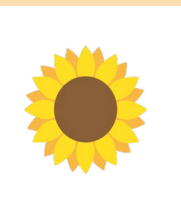
Looked After - A term used to refer to children and young people who are in the care of their Local Authority Social Services department.

Ofsted - A government agency that makes sure that foster care agencies are doing what they are supposed to in caring for children.

Parental Responsibility - The person or people with parental responsibility can make the important decisions about a child, such as - who they will live with, what school they will attend, and decisions about medical treatment. A local authority can get parental responsibility for a child under a Care Order but the parents will still have it too.

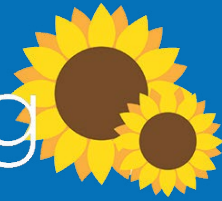
Social Worker / Social Services - A Social Worker is a person who has been trained to know about the welfare of children and families.

Wishes and Feelings - This phrase usually relates to the wishes and feelings of the child involved in the case in respect of who they want to live with, who they want to see and other wishes. The Children's Guardian must record the child's wishes and feelings in the guardian report. If a mature child disagrees with the recommendations made by the Children's Guardian then the solicitor must make sure the Judge or Magistrate know the young person's wishes and feelings and that there is a disagreement. Your views and wishes are very important to Excel Fostering and help us in providing good foster carers that will care and look after you.



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