

**EASTERN  
FOSTERING  
SERVICES**



**YOUNG PEOPLE'S  
GUIDE TO  
FOSTERING**

# Who we are

Hi .....

Welcome to Eastern Fostering Services. We are a team of people who will be working with your new foster parents to help look after you. You might not get to meet all of us, but we are here if you ever need us 😊



**El – The Boss!**



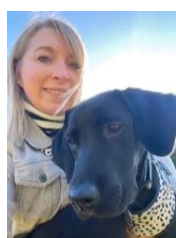
**Stan – Team Mascot**



**SARAH**



**DAISY**



**JO**



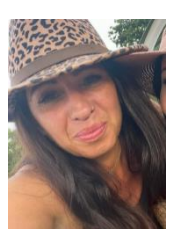
**JODIE**



**SUE**



**SAM A**



**SAM G**



**EMILY**



**MIA**



**PAUL**



**LOUISE**



**ALISHA**



**YVETTE**



**SANDRA**

# Baby Pic Game

Can you guess the EFS Staff Member??

1.



2.



3.



4.



Baby pic game answers! 1. Emily 2. Paul 3. Sarah 4. Yvette



## *Why do I have to be looked after by Foster Carers?*

Sometimes children and young people can't live with their own family. This might be because their family couldn't take care of them properly or because something wasn't safe.

All children need a home where they feel safe, cared for, and supported as they grow up. Foster families help by giving children a safe place to live. Sometimes children stay with a foster family for a short time while things get better at home. Other times, they stay until they are older and ready to live on their own.

Your foster family should treat you like part of their family, just like their own children. They understand that this might feel strange or difficult for you, and they are there to help and support you.

Being in a foster family doesn't mean your own family doesn't love you. It's okay to still love your family, and you don't have to forget about them.

## *What happens now?*

When you move in to live with your new fostering family, they will show you around the house and make sure you know where everything is. They will also make sure you know the names of everyone who lives in the home.

You might feel quite wobbly at first, this is totally normal. It is a big change.

When you live with a fostering family, you will have a social worker who will be talking to you and your family about what is best for the future. A social worker is someone who tries to help children and families who have serious problems.

Eastern Fostering Services has a duty to make sure you are as safe and happy as possible whilst you are with us, and we will work with your fostering family and your local authority social worker to sort things out for you.

Whilst you are with us, your foster carers will have their own EFS social worker who they will see regularly and make sure you are ok.



# How will I know what to do?

It is pretty likely that your fostering family will not have exactly the same rules or interests as your own family, so below is a checklist of questions you might like to ask so you can get to know things a bit better.

If you have any more that this list doesn't cover, do ask, they won't mind.

- Can I still see my own family whilst I live here?

Answer.....

- Can I bring my own things with me?

Answer.....

- Can I watch the TV programmes I like?

Answer.....

- What time do you expect me to go to bed?

Answer.....

- Can I go out on my own?

Answer.....

- Can I help myself to food if I am hungry?

Answer.....

- Can my friends come round?

Answer.....

- Can I game online and use social media?

Answer.....

- Will I still go to the same school?

Answer.....

- What should I do if I need something?

Answer.....

➤ What happens if I do something wrong?

Answer.....

➤ Do you allow mobile phones?

Answer.....

➤ Will I get pocket money? How much?

Answer.....

➤ Are there any house rules that I should know?

Answer.....

➤ More questions you would like to ask...

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.....  
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## *I don't know how to feel about this*

It can feel like you have no say in what is happening to you, but your views are very important, and what you tell your social worker will help them make the best plans for you.

You can also talk to your fostering family, your teacher or any adult that you can trust. It is totally normal to feel confused, angry and sad, as well as relieved sometimes – you have been through a lot of change. The best thing to do is to try to let any feelings out and let the people you trust know what is going on for you – otherwise, they won't always know how best to help you.

When you live with a fostering family, it can seem that suddenly there are loads of different people in your life.

A care order gives social services parental responsibility. This means that social services, rather than your parents have the job of looking after you and you will have your own social worker. Although they will make decisions about where you live and who you see, they should still talk to your parents about important things, and they should always talk to you to find out how you feel. A care order will last until you are 18, unless somebody asks the courts to change their decision.

## *What can I do if I am not happy?*



**If you are not happy in your fostering family, you must say so.**

Sometimes it can be difficult to settle with a new group of people, and your social worker is there to help you as much as possible. They will not mind at all, whatever you tell them, because they are there for you.

Sometimes, things can get sorted out much easier than you think – just ask!

If you are not happy about the plans that have been made for you or your own family, you can talk to any adult you can trust first, and if they still can't help you, you can talk to **Eleanor Newman** or **Jo Elliott** at EFS. They will listen to everything you say and decide what the best thing to do is. Eleanor's mobile number is **07730535748** and Jo's mobile number is **07901064509**.



*You are not alone!*

Lots of children and young people live in Fostering families because there are so many different reasons why their own families can't look after them.

Did you know that in March 2025, there were 54,820 children living with foster families in England. Even if there aren't any in your school, they are out there!

It is not something you should feel embarrassed about but if you need help in what to tell your friends or to say to people at school, ask your fostering family or your social worker.

# What do you want us to know?

**There might be some things you want your foster family to know about you, for example -**

- How you can help me when I am angry

Answer.....

- How you can help me when I am sad

Answer .....

- What is my favourite food

Answer.....

- How would you like us to introduce you to others?

Answer.....

- What are my favourite hobbies?

Answer.....

- What is most important to me?

Answer.....

- What is my least favourite thing?

Answer.....

If there is anything else you would like your fostering family to know, you can write it here...

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# Some things to look forward to...

We aim to have lots of fun here at EFS!

Paul is one of our children's champions, and he organises great days out for our children and families 😊 He may also come and visit you at your foster family's home and take you out for the day!



# Choices for Young Voices

If you are fostered by one of our families and you are over 11, you are very welcome to join our Choices for Young Voices group. The group is hosted by Sandra, and we meet in most school holidays. Our Director El joins in too and takes your views very seriously. The group gives you chance to have your say! And we truly value your opinions and ideas on

- What could we do better
- What you think we are doing well
- Ideas for new activities and fun days out
- The things that matter to you, such as managing your socials, online gaming and all the pressures of being online.
- Potential new foster parents' answers to the children's section of the application form

The group is very welcoming and supportive, and it gives you chance to spend time with each other, make some new friends and, of course, we will provide the pizza!



# Useful Information

If you are worried or upset about something, and don't feel you can talk to your fostering family, your social worker at Eastern Fostering Services or your Local Authority Social Worker, there is still lots of support out there for you. Here is a list of useful contacts for you.

- **Childline** – [0800 1111](tel:08001111) or <https://www.childline.org.uk> Childline can help with lots of things (like bullying for example) and there are options to speak to someone direct or send a message if you don't want to do that. If you need help with communication, there is an option to chat direct to a counsellor who has a British Sign Language Interpreter with them
- **Online Safety**-For any worries you might have about the way someone may have been communicating with you online, do contact CEOP-they have loads of really useful guidance and they know how easy it can be to make a mistake, look up <https://www.ceop.police.uk>
- **Emotional Issues**-The Samaritans can help provide confidential support to young people who are struggling with emotional issues and maybe thinking of hurting themselves, try calling them on 116 123 or their website is <https://www.samaritans.org>
- **Gender Identity**-Mermaids is an organisation that aims to be a safe place for transgender, non-binary and gender-diverse children and young people to find support and help one another. You can call them on 0808 801 0400 or email them. Their website is <https://www.mermaids.org.uk>
- **Being in Care**-Become is the national charity who are there to support every child and young person with experience of the care system. They invite you to tell them what isn't working for you and they will fight to make change happen. Their website is <https://www.becomecharity.org.uk/>
- **Mental Health**-Young Minds is an organisation that can help with all kinds of information to give you the tools to help you look after your mental health. Their website has real-life stories, and lots of useful links. If you need urgent help, you can text Shout Textline which offers you free 24/7 text messaging support. Just text SHOUT to 852258 to start a chat. Their website is <https://www.youngminds.org.uk>
- **Ofsted** – They make sure EFS are looking after you properly. Their address is Picadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD. You can call them on 0300 123 1231 or email them on [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk) or visit their website [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

# More Useful Information!

## **Your Foster Carers**

Name: .....

Telephone: .....

Email: .....

## **Your Social Worker**

Name: .....

Telephone: .....

Email: .....

## **My Foster Carers Social Worker (EFS)**

Name: .....

Our Telephone Number is: 01206 299775

Email: .....

## **Other important people to you**

Name : .....

Telephone: .....

Email: .....

Name : .....

Telephone: .....

Email: .....

Name : .....

Telephone: .....

Email: .....