

Ethelbert

Fostering Services

Inspiring children to succeed!

Recruitment Brochure





Lovely to meet you!

Congratulations on taking the first steps to consider welcoming a foster child into your family!

At Ethelbert we pride ourselves on providing our foster carers with all the knowledge, skills and support that they require to be able to provide excellent therapeutic care to the children we look after.

Fostering is not for the faint hearted, you will need strength and resilience, but don't worry, we will be with you every step of the way. Children come into foster care for many different reasons, however all will have experienced significant trauma to differing degrees and this often reflects in how they regulate their emotions and how they express these to others.

Caring for a child in care is not like caring for your own child and you will be supported to parent in a therapeutic way, which may be different from how you have parented before. Again, don't worry, you will receive all the training and support that you need to be able to do this.

I hope you enjoy the information in the following pages and please do not hesitate to make contact with the office if you have any questions or want any additional information.

Jenny Beraet – Registered Manager



What Sets us *apart*

24/7 support

You will always have support available at the end of the phone, either from your allocated Social Worker, the duty Social Worker or the Out of Hours Social Worker. Small caseloads mean your Social Worker will have time to support you and your family. We also offer therapeutic support for children and carers.

A family feel

We pride ourselves on being a family run organisation and welcome you and your family to join us at the many social events and activities we run throughout the year. You will have your own foster carer mentor to support you and support from our Foster Carer Ambassadors.

Expert child-focused matching

Our Referrals Manager works with you and your Social Worker to find the best possible match between a child and your entire family. We believe this match is central to the success of your families fostering experience.

Enhanced skills

We have high expectations for the children we look after and provide an extensive training programme to support you to have the skills to deliver this high level of care. All children need a secure base from which to explore and our therapeutic parenting approach supports you to provide this.

Financial viability

We offer a competitive fostering allowance, including tax exemption/relief. You will receive a paid stayover allowance to provide your family with time for self-care. We offer financial contributions to travel and holidays and recognise carers length of service through our Annual Review reward scheme.



About us

Ethelbert Fostering Services (EFS) is a substantial and versatile provision that caters for solo children, sibling groups and children and young people with a variety of complex needs. It is well resourced with education, health, and therapeutic provisions.

The focus of the agency is to ensure safe and stable matches where children and young people can thrive and develop to achieve their full potential. Often our children and young people arrive following a series of breakdowns of living arrangements. By specifically matching the presenting needs of the individual child with the identified skills of our dedicated foster carers, we succeed in providing stability and structure to their lives and help them progress towards positive outcomes.

At our last Ofsted Inspection in 2024 the agency was awarded an overall rating of 'Good'. Our mission statement reflects this:

"Our shared belief is that good quality foster placements help achieve stability for children and young people, satisfaction and accomplishment for carers but most importantly affords these children and young people a vital second chance to experience a safe and fulfilling childhood".

Who are we

At Ethelbert Fostering Services, we fully recognise the importance of developing supportive, trusting two-way relationships and place enormous value on the contribution foster carers make. To ensure we achieve this, Supervising Social Workers are carefully selected for their people skills, empathy, and developmental abilities as well as their social work credentials and experience.

Caseloads are capped at realistic levels to ensure each of our foster carers and the children they look after have first-class, personalised support as and when they need it, not just when it can be fitted in to a demanding, overstretched schedule.

Unlike many fostering agencies, Ethelbert Fostering Services is not wholly reliant upon public health and education services to ensure the children we care for can access support in these areas. As the agency is directly affiliated to Ethelbert Children's Services specialist education and health support services, we can usually provide access to specialist schooling and appropriate therapeutic support when it is required. Specialist support services can be provided either as a bridging measure to ensure continuity of support, or as longer term, holistic care planning solutions.



Could you become a foster carer

Foster carers come from all walks of life and backgrounds, just like the children and young people they care for. The main requirement is a genuine interest in the welfare of children and the ability to provide a safe, stable, and nurturing environment in which they can thrive and prosper.

There are many myths as to who can and who cannot foster, and the list below is designed to provide accurate advice to anyone considering a career in foster care.

Age

To become a foster carer with Ethelbert Fostering Services, you must be at least 18 years of age. There is no upper age limit as long as you are fit and healthy.

Accommodation

You will need to have a minimum of one spare bedroom and either own your home or have a stable tenancy agreement and agreement from your landlord.

Marital Status

Whether you are single man or woman, married, in a civil partnership or cohabiting, you can apply to become a foster carer.

Sexuality & Gender

We welcome applications from across the LGBTQ+ community. You can apply to be a foster carer whatever your gender identity or sexuality.

Culture & Religion

We need foster carers from all walks of life as children tend to thrive best in families that can reflect their own culture, language, and religion.

Health & Disability

Health impairment or disability need not be a barrier to fostering, if you can provide the lifestyle necessary for an active child or young person.

Foster Carer Charter

The Foster Carers' Charter represents the expectations of the Placing Authority in its role as the corporate parent, EFS, and the foster carer to work in partnership in the best interests of the children for whom they care. It is a promise to always strive for best practice. Our working relationships are built on trust and respect which recognise you as a pivotal member in the wraparound care we provide as a team around the child. Our charter contains the principles underpinning partnership working and the standards of care and support which foster carers and fostering staff will work together to uphold.



Statement of purpose and a children's guide to fostering

Every fostering service must have a Statement of Purpose which describes its services and how each service will comply with legislation, regulations, and the National Minimum Fostering Standards. It must detail the service aims and objectives and how these will help children achieve positive outcomes. Ethelbert's Fostering Service Statement of Purpose is reviewed annually and can be viewed on the website.

EFS has produced two children's guides to fostering, one for younger children and one for older children. These guides set out how EFS works to ensure that child's needs are met and what children can do if they have any problems or complaints. Copies of the guide are included in the welcome boxes given to children when they first arrive in your home. A child friendly complaints policy is also included. It is good practice for you to help the child to understand this information early on. Where children have disabilities or speak limited English, the Supervising Social Worker will make suitable arrangements for the information in the guides to be explained to children in a form which meets their needs and level of understanding. Use the QR code below to take a look at our Statement of Purpose.

Scan our QR code to have a read through our Statement of Purpose.



Financial reward

Becoming a foster carer is a lifestyle and a career, the points below detail the financial reward offered at Ethelbert Fostering.

- EFS A minimum of £537.46 per week, per child placed in your care
- EFS Consideration for enhanced rate of pay for specialist care
- EFS 14 days paid annual stayovers per year
- EFS Financial contribution for taking children in your care on holiday
- EFS Vehicle and fuel expenses when travelling with children outside of the local area (*above 20miles at 45p per mile*)
- EFS Referral bonus of £2000

The services we offer

Health Promotions Specialist

Our Health Promotion Specialist, Carrie Martin, is instrumental in the support we offer our young people. She is available to offer children a safe space for education on topics important in their lives.

This includes topics such as sexual health, puberty, relationships and smoking.

Carrie works with children individually and within groups, running small groups yearly on important topics. Carrie's support not only helps children we care for but offers foster carers an additional layer of support. Carrie runs training for foster carers on these topics and provides important updates in our monthly newsletter to ensure you have up to date knowledge.

Education Champion

Julie Egan is our Education Champion here at Ethelbert. She was a teacher for 20 years before moving into the role and is passionate about education and the stability, opportunities, and improved life chances that it brings to children. Julie works with other professionals to ensure that our children have all the support they need in place to enable them to have an equal opportunity to achieve their potential. Julie supports foster carers, Social Workers, and the children through their education journey and this includes offering advice, information sheets, celebrating achievements, monitoring progress through the PEPs, liaising with professionals and generally having a good overview of where our children are at educationally.

Therapy Services

Young people in our care can have access to a range of therapy services which includes psychotherapy, systemic therapy, CBT and counselling, together with a range of creative therapies including art, drama, music and play. All services are provided on a needs led basis. You would have the opportunity to work closely with any designated therapists, and Therapy Services Manager. As therapeutic intervention is on a formal one-to-one basis, we require each young person to settle into placement before making a referral as it's recognised that a 'secure base' is essential for assessments to be reliable and any subsequent interventions effective. Whilst this period is different for each young person, it is usually achieved after 12 weeks of moving into your home.

Detailed information can be found on our website at: <https://www.ethelbertonline.co.uk/therapy/>

Dedicated Referrals Manager

Child focused matching is integral to foster care. Here at Ethelbert we have an experienced, skilled and dedicated Referrals Manager, Emma Jack. She works alongside foster carers and Social Workers to ensure children's holistic needs are considered against foster carer skillsets and abilities. Emma meets with carers before considering any children and speaks to them about their home, family and skills. This ensures that when we match, we are matching to your whole family and not just you.

The services we offer

Participation

We strive to ensure that the service is led by our children and families. We do this by ensuring we consider participation throughout everything we do. We ensure children and carers have a voice in the service and offer spaces for them to share their views of how we can improve what we do. Each year we run a number of events which are fun, educational and supportive; this includes our agency children's council, workshops and support groups. We ask our children for feedback on what we do regularly and make changes as a result of their views. Agency events also offer opportunities for families to meet and create links which provides further support.

Dedicated Recruitment Team

We are always considering how we can recruit new foster carers and this is overseen by our dedicated recruitment team. Emma and Lee offer a friendly and welcoming introduction into the agency and are there to answer questions about becoming a foster carer.

Our Schools

The Old Priory School

The Old Priory School provides a differentiated curriculum that includes GCSE studies together with more creative curriculums such as ASDAN, AQA and vocational studies in a range of occupational subjects. Classroom sizes are small (2-6) and qualified teachers are supported by experienced and suitably trained LSAs. Full information can be found on the school's website at: www.oldprioryschool.co.uk

The Davenport School

The Davenport School caters for key stage one and two students (7-11) of mixed ability with a range of emotional difficulties and challenging behaviours.

The aim of the Davenport School is to provide a child centred environment that meets the individual learning needs of all students. We do this through a varied and creative curriculum that develops physical, cognitive, emotional, and social skills. Lessons are made fun and interactive with a focus on emotional development and with a qualified teacher and high ratio of learning support staff in each class, ensuring children are given the care and support they need.

Detailed information can be found on the school's website at: www.davenportschool.co.uk



Ofsted is responsible for the regulation and inspection of all children's social care services that require statutory registration, which includes children's homes and adoption and fostering agencies, both those run by Local Authorities and those independently managed. Ofsted assesses the performance of all regulated children's services, ensuring that they are meeting the relevant regulations and considering the appropriate National Minimum Standards. Where regulations are not met, Ofsted sets actions for providers and may take enforcement action in serious cases. As part of the inspection, staff, foster carers, and fostered children are interviewed. Inspectors will want to hear your views of the services provided to your fostered children as well as check whether you are being provided with the appropriate training, monitoring visits and support. Our most recent inspection awarded us a rating of "Good". Inspection reports are published on the Ofsted website. Scan our QR code to read our report.

Scan our QR code to read our Ofsted report



Foster carer regulations

Ethelbert Fostering Services acts as a Fostering Agency under The Fostering Services Regulations (2011). Fostering is a highly regulated service with many requirements set out in legislation and routinely inspected by Ofsted. The rules and regulations seek to ensure that fostered children are provided with high quality, safe and consistent care. The Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards (2011) are issued for use by Ofsted (underpinned by the 2011 Regulations, Statutory Guidance for fostering services – Children's Act 1989 guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services), who take them into account in the inspection of fostering services.

The 'Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011' can be found at;

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/581/contents/made>

'National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services' can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fostering-services-national-minimum-standards>



Journey to becoming a foster carer

1. Enquiry

Once you enquire with us you will be provided with information and criteria required of a prospective foster carer. We will ask a few questions at this point and we encourage you to ask questions. We will then arrange to visit you at your home.

2. Initial Home Visit

This is arranged to progress the enquiry, look at your accommodation, assess your existing family commitments and for you to ask questions. You will also receive this brochure for more information. If at this point we are all happy to move forward you will be given an application form.

3. Application and Second Visit

Once we receive your completed application form, you will receive a second visit. This is to gain a little more detail from you and talk about the expectations of fostering.

4. Assessments Start

Once we accept your application we will allocate an assessing Social Worker and your Form F assessment will begin.

5. Pre-approval training

During your assessment you will join us for preparation training. This is a two day course and will offer you insight into the role of a foster carer and an introduction to trauma.

6. Panel

When your assessment is complete it will be presented to a panel of independent people. They will consider the assessment and ask you questions. They will then make a recommendation based on this which is presented to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM).

7. ADM

Our Agency Decision Maker will consider the information and recommendation of panel and will make a decision on your approval. This can take around two weeks minimum.

8. Approval

If you receive a positive approval by the ADM we will contact you so as to make arrangements to begin your induction process.

9. Allocation and Induction

We will allocate you a Supervising Social Worker in the team who will meet with you within a week of your approval to begin the induction. The induction takes around four weeks to complete and covers a comprehensive introduction to the agency and your new journey as foster carers!

What is a form F Assessment

A Form F assessment, also known as a [fostering assessment](#), is a comprehensive assessment conducted to determine if someone is suitable to become a foster carer. It's a detailed report that assesses an individual's/couple's capacity, experiences, motivations, and skills to provide a safe and nurturing environment for a child in care. The process involves multiple social worker visits, background checks, references, and completion of the Form F report. Here's key points:

Purpose:

- **Evaluate Suitability:** The primary goal is to ensure that prospective foster carers are capable of meeting the needs of a child in care.
- **Prepare for Fostering:** The assessment helps prospective carers understand the responsibilities and challenges of fostering, and prepares them for the task.
- **Commitment Verification:** It confirms the applicant's genuine commitment to fostering and their ability to remain dedicated to the process.

Key Aspects Assessed:

- **Background:** This includes criminal record checks, Local Authority checks, health assessments, and financial stability.
- **Experiences:** Previous experiences with children, family dynamics, and personal relationships are reviewed.
- **Motivations:** The assessment explores the reasons for wanting to foster and the applicant's understanding of the fostering role.
- **Home Environment:** The safety, suitability, and overall environment of the applicant's home are assessed.
- **Skills and Capacities:** The assessment evaluates the applicant's ability to provide care, manage challenging situations, and meet the specific needs of the child.

Process:

- **Social Worker Visits:** A Social Worker will conduct multiple visits to the applicant's home, often over a period of 6 months.
- **Form F Report:** They will completed a detailed report that captures all the information gathered during the assessment process.
- **References and Checks:** Background checks, including DBS checks, and references from previous employers, Local Authorities and ex-partners are required.
- **Training:** Prospective foster parents may need to complete initial training as part of the assessment.

Independent review *Mechanism*

The Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) is a review process which foster carers and prospective foster carers can use if they do not agree with the qualifying determination given to them by their fostering service provider. The IRM provide independent panels that review suitability to adopt or foster and other decisions made by adoption and fostering providers. A review panel will consider the case and make a recommendation to the agency decision-maker, who may or may not accept it.

If carers wish to take this course of action, they should write to:

The Contract Manager
Unit 4 Pavilion Business Park
Royds Hall Road
Wortley
Leeds
LS12 6AJ
United Kingdom

More information on the process can be found on the IRM website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/independent-review-mechanism/about>

Contact *us*

Head Office

If you wish to ask any other questions please feel free to contact us on the details below:

Ethelbert Children's Services
17 Leigh Road
Ramsgate
Kent
CT12 5EU

Telephone:
01843 823762

Email:
fostering@ethelbert.net

