



# One minute guide

## Fostering for children with disabilities

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### What do we mean by fostering for children with disabilities?

Some of the work of Leeds Fostering Service is concerned with specifically recruiting, assessing, training and supporting foster carers to provide care for children with disabilities.

These carers often have previous experience of caring for children with disabilities in their personal or work life. Foster carers who care for children with disabilities provide short term and long term fostering and have specialist skills and experience in caring for children with disabilities.

These foster carers access specialist training and support groups and have supervising social workers who are also experienced in working with children with disabilities. Supervising social workers work closely with the child's social worker and foster carer to form a team around the child.

The fostering service also provides [fostering short breaks](#) for children with complex needs.

### How do people become foster carers for children with disabilities?

The council has its own [Foster4Leeds](#) website and through this, people are encouraged to register an interest in becoming a foster carer.

People over the age of 21 may apply to become a Foster Carer but those between the ages of 21 and 25 years would need to provide evidence of relevant transferable skills and/ or related experience. Interest is **welcomed** from all members of the community, regardless of relationship status, employment situation, class, gender, sexuality, culture, ethnicity or religion.

There is immediate **exclusion** of any applicant who has been convicted of any serious offence against a child or adult. Leeds is usually seeking to recruit more foster carers for teenagers and for those with the skills to work with children and young people with disabilities.

There is an approval process which starts with a conversation about fostering and followed (if both parties agree to proceed at each stage) by a home visit, training, preparation and if appropriate, the formal application and statutory checks.

Prospective foster carers must enjoy the challenges of childcare, and have qualities such as patience, resourcefulness, flexibility and a sense of humour.

Foster carers are provided with various types of support, including financial support, to help them with their role.

## Which children and young people can access this?

Eligible children are those with disabilities including:

- A physical disability;
- A learning disability (moderate to severe);
- A sensory impairment (severe);
- Complex needs—multiple impairments;
- Autistic spectrum disorders;
- Complex health needs; or
- A combination of the above.

The service accepts sibling groups where one of the siblings meets this criteria.

## How is the service accessed?

As with all fostering, the service can only be accessed from within Leeds Children's Social Work Service. Social Workers contact the Placement Support Team to find a suitable match for the child or young person.

When a potential match is identified, a foster carer profile can be shared with the child and family (where appropriate) which includes pictures and information about the home and foster carers.

## Key contacts or for more information

You can find further information on the Leeds City Council [Foster4Leeds](#) website.

You can also contact the Fostering Children with Disabilities Team tel: 0113 3783665.