

North East Lincolnshire Council



FOSTERING

in North East Lincolnshire



Could you be the difference to a local child?



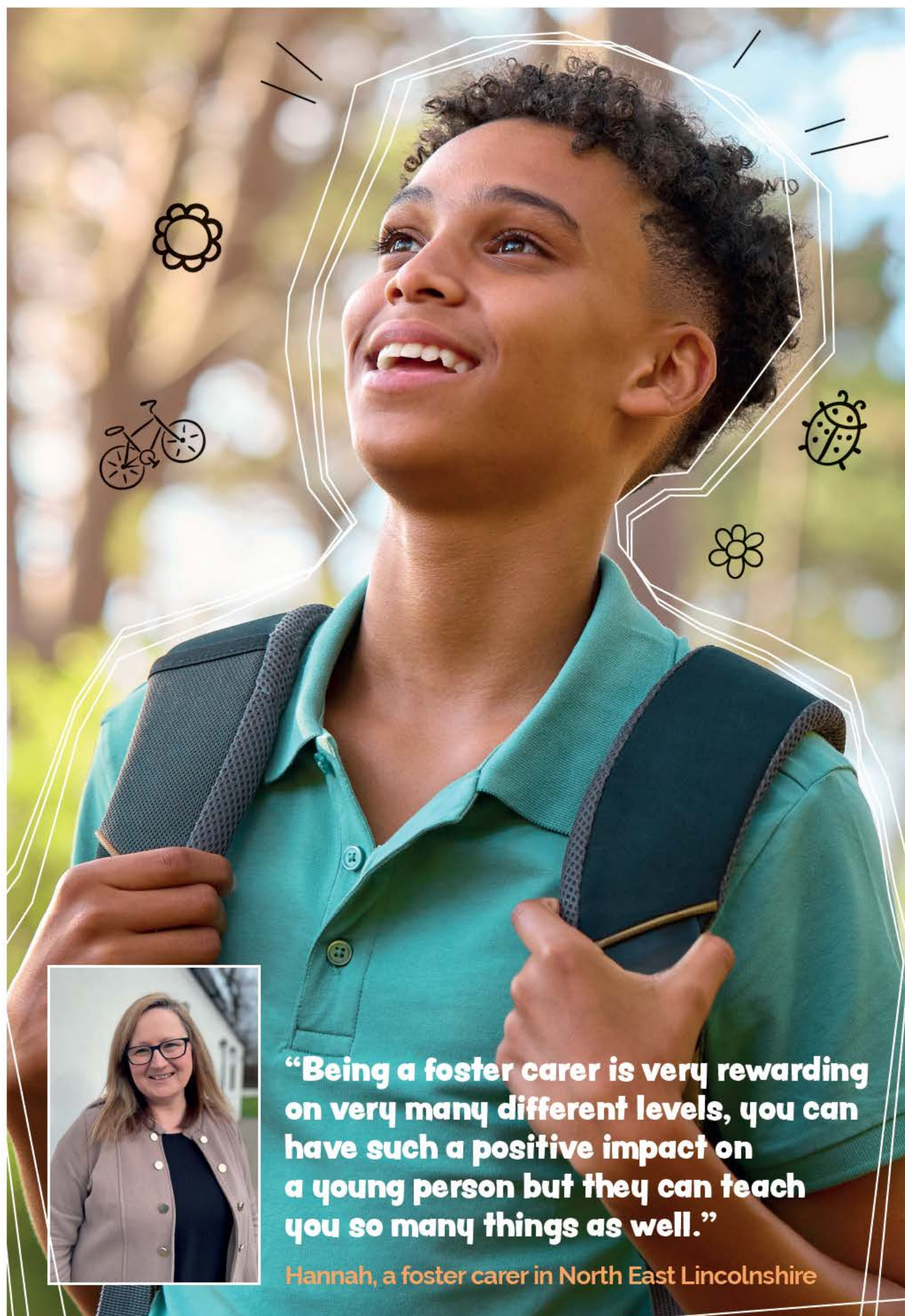
Thank you for getting in touch with us and enquiring about being a foster carer, this is the first step in making the difference to a local child in our community!

We are extremely proud of our children and young people in North East Lincolnshire. They are inspirational, wonderful and individually unique.

We are committed to making sure our children remain living in their own local area where they can remain connected to their communities, family and friends and school.

The children and young people in our care deserve loving and stable homes which allow them to thrive. We want them to feel valued, loved and respected.

We have put this brochure together to provide you with information about fostering for NELC alongside information also on our website.



“Being a foster carer is very rewarding on very many different levels, you can have such a positive impact on a young person but they can teach you so many things as well.”

Hannah, a foster carer in North East Lincolnshire

About 79 percent of children who are looked after away from home in the UK live with foster families.



As a foster carer, you provide a safe, nurturing and loving family home for children and young people who are unable to be with their birth family.

This could be short-term or long-term. There are many different reasons why children need foster care, but what is consistent is their need for a secure and loving environment that will allow them to thrive.

We truly believe that children in our care need a whole community around them which supports them and their foster carer/fostering family to be loved and valued. We work hard alongside partner agencies such as housing and education and the local community to wrap support around our fostering families.

Foster care isn't always easy, but it offers the opportunity to make a huge difference to the lives of the children who need it and can be a very rewarding experience for those who are passionate about caring for young people and making a difference to their lives.

Types of Foster Care



Sleepovers

Sleepover care is a short-term home for a child or young person, if their main carer is unwell, charging their batteries or many other reasons. This can often be good for those foster carers with more free time at weekends and/or school holidays. We like to see this as a holiday for a child or young person, to try new experiences and develop positive relationships with their sleepover carer. We have children who regularly stay with the same sleepover carer which they enjoy and look forward to.


Short term mainstream Fostering

Some children and young people may need to stay with you for a little while until they can return to their parents, birth family or are adopted. Other children need a stable home for longer and support into adulthood. This is called mainstream fostering, you can consider where your skills are best matched such as babies, toddlers, teenagers or sibling groups.

Long-term fostering

Some older children are not able to return to their birth parents or wider family. In this case, our preference is for some children to be placed with long-term foster carers, who will look after a child until they are 18. We undertake a rigorous matching process that assesses the child's needs and identifies carers' abilities to meet them. Often, carers who started out providing short-term care, go on to become long-term carers because they have established a positive relationship with them.

The child or children will be part of your family, and their voice heard at all opportunities. As a foster carer you would be the child or children's guardian with delegated authority to make certain decisions such as GP appointments, school trips and holidays. You too will have an important voice and say in the child or children's care plan.



Like many families, a lot of our foster carers continue to work and undertake hobbies whilst fostering. We work hard with local businesses and schools to support their employers who choose to make a difference by fostering for NELC.

We hold support groups and regular events for our fostering families to come together. We support new carers with more experienced buddies and ensure lots of fun and laughter in our fostering community.

Other types of care



Children with disabilities

In addition to short and long-term foster carers, we also require carers for children with disabilities. This could be for short periods on a regular basis while their parents take some time off. As a short break foster carer, in addition to our standard training and support, you will also receive additional specialist training to help you understand the needs of any child you may look after. You will also have access to a Fostering social worker, who will work closely with you.

Supported lodging

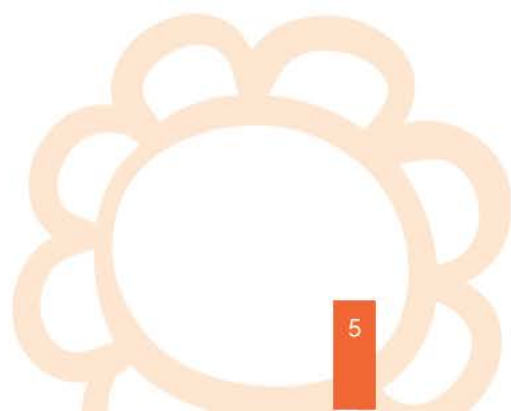
The Supported Lodging Scheme provides young people aged 16-18 with good quality accommodation together with the security and support that living with a responsible adult can offer. As a supported lodging carer, you will be there to help young people learn the skills they need to live independently and become responsible and confident individuals. They may stay with you for up to two years.

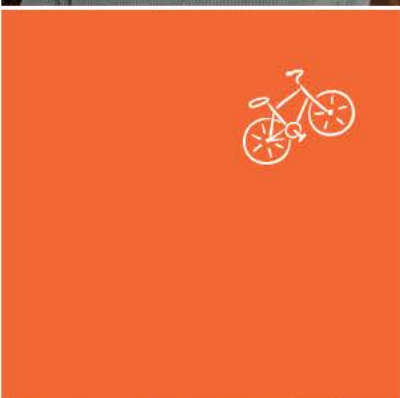
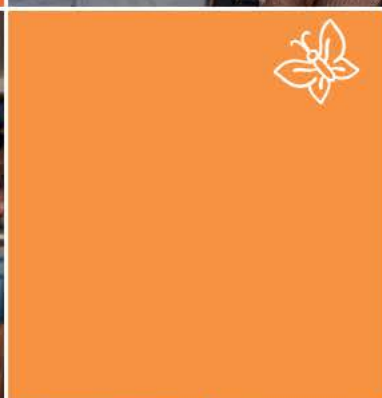
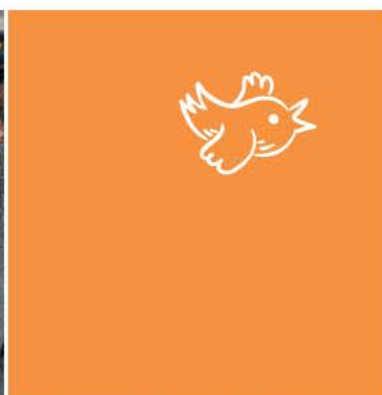
Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC)

We need foster carers who are able to provide a home for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. These children are likely to have experienced trauma, both in their country of origin and their difficult journey to seek refuge. Often these children are separated from family and can feel isolated in an unfamiliar country. You will need to be able to provide a home, and support the young person, with any legal process they may require. They will need someone who is able to support their cultural needs and have patience and understanding due to their experiences.

Parent & child fostering

Parent and child is a specialist fostering home. The role for the foster carer is to supervise and support a teenager or young adult the responsibilities of parenting. The young parent and child will live with you in your home and parents are supported to parent with your support and guidance.





Can I be a foster carer?

For many people, one of the biggest barriers to starting their fostering journey is a fear that they do not have the right background, situation, or skills. The fact is, there is no one type of person or family that is the 'ideal' foster carer. Our cared-for children are diverse, with many different needs, so we welcome foster carers from all walks of life, with a range of life and employment experiences. What we are looking for is a willingness to offer children and young people a safe, secure, and nurturing home.

What makes a great foster carer?

Fostering is incredibly rewarding, but equally challenging at times as you support children to recover from previous trauma they may have experienced in their lives. What do we think foster carers need?

- A sense of humour and resilience
- Natural ability to offer care that is nurturing, providing children with warmth and acceptance
- To work as part of a team in ensuring the best outcomes for children
- To be non-judgemental
- To support a child's identity and create and capture as many good memories as possible

Supporting you all the way

You are not alone in your fostering journey. There are many benefits of fostering directly through North East Lincolnshire Council including:

Learning and development

We want all our foster carers to feel confident and have the skills and knowledge to help them in their roles. We are committed to ensuring that foster carers are supported in their learning and development which is why we offer an extensive range of training courses and workshops. All foster carers have access to all the corporate training which is available to all professionals who work in children's services, as well as access to online training and reading material. Some of the training we offer includes safeguarding, understanding attachment, child development, first aid, understanding trauma and internet safety.

We have a training and development programme which details all of the training we have on offer to foster carers as well as useful links to websites on a wide range of topics, and what support is available to all foster carers.

Fostering social worker

You will have a dedicated social worker assigned to you, whose job it is to support you every step of the way. All our fostering social workers are highly experienced and qualified, so have the breadth of experience and skills to help you with whatever you need. You will also be supported by a multi-agency team around a child. One of the benefits of being a foster carer with the Council is the number of resources we can access to support the specific needs of you and the children you care for.

Ongoing support

"My husband and I have been foster carers for nearly 30 years, over the years we have met all sorts of people through fostering, some of whom are now great friends. Sharing our experiences and stories with other people who get it is a massive help to us."

We have a fantastic, supportive community in North East Lincolnshire which we recommend you make the most of. We are all in this together and by sharing experiences and advice we can make sure we give children the best opportunities and outcomes.



Are you ready to take the next step into fostering? Visit our website, where you will find a wealth of information and details of how to get in touch for an informal chat or to make an enquiry.



**“My foster carer
is kind, caring,
and gives me my
own space
when I need it...
She’s always
there for me.”**

Eliza* 7 years old



Take the first step to fostering with North East Lincolnshire Council
www.nelincs.org.uk/fostering

Or speak to one of our fostering team by calling **01472 323966**