



Fostering
Gloucestershire
County Council



Emergency and Out of Hours Foster Care



Could you be a place of safety for a child coming into care?



What is emergency foster care?

Sometimes, a child will need to enter care, or change foster homes, with very short notice. We need foster carers who will commit in advance to being available. Typically, an emergency arrangement will last 72 hours, although we might ask you to extend that.

"We were asked at 8pm about taking a three year old. They arrived, fast asleep, at 1:30am and we managed to carry them up to bed without waking them. They slept soundly and ended up staying a few months. Others have only stayed a short time but we have been able to help them settle and calm down after a traumatic removal, then prepare them for their next step."

Judy



Who will you look after?

You can state the age, gender and number of children you are comfortable to care for. If you are approached about a child within your stated preferences, you are expected to accept the child and care for them, unless there is a risk. Outside of your stated preference, it is up to you if you feel able to meet the needs of the child and care for them.



Flexible availability

You contact GCC each Friday to let them know about your availability for the following week. The out of hours provision is from 5pm-9am weekdays, and from 5pm on a Friday until 9am on a Monday if it is over the weekend (or Tuesday if it is a bank holiday).

"There are many foster carers that are amazing at taking children into their homes for longer periods of time. But I feel my strength is in caring for those in an emergency situation. Considering the levels of fear many of them are feeling - I'm humbled by their resilience. Whether I'm met with anger, sadness, or stone cold silence, I will sit with them, throughout the day or the night and just be there for them."

Jools



Retainer and payments

For each night you are available, you will be paid a retainer. GCC has increased its retainers to £45 per night if you are willing to take children aged between 0 and 17, and £20 per night if your preference is for children aged 0 to 9. If a child is placed with you then you will receive skills and maintenance payments instead, which are higher.



What do we need from you?

You need to answer your phone if we call, and be able to accept a child the same day. You will also need a spare room in your home (in addition to any already occupied), the ability to stay calm, show resilience, and provide caring reassurance to a child.



What support will you receive?

As well as the support and training all foster carers receive, you will be invited to join our Emergency & Out of Hours support group which runs bi-monthly. Your Supervising Social Worker will be fully involved and supportive of your role as an emergency foster carer, and there is always someone you can talk to in the emergency duty team.

"My experience of emergency fostering has been a very positive one. I have enjoyed having every single young person that has been placed with us. I have found the GCC placements team to be so helpful and willing to go above and beyond to ensure I have all the relevant information available prior to the young person arriving. If I had more bedrooms I would 100% have a room for emergency fostering."

Sarah

Find out more

If you would like more information about being an emergency and out of hours foster carer, please email placementfinding@gloucestershire.gov.uk or call **01452 425589**



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