

# Fostering FAQS



**Diagrama**  
Fostering & Adoption



## Am I too old to foster?

Anyone over 21 can apply to become a foster carer and there is no upper age limit – in fact several of our foster carers are aged 60+. However, your age and health will be considered when considering the age and needs of the children suitable for placement with you.

## Do I need to be married to be a foster carer?

No – our foster carers can be single, married couples, couples in civil partnerships or unmarried couples (whether heterosexual or same-sex) – the most important thing is that you are able to demonstrate your ability to provide a caring, stable and nurturing environment for your foster child.

## I am from a minority ethnic background – can I foster?

Yes! We welcome foster carers from all backgrounds, regardless of race/ethnicity. Local authorities often match children with foster carers from similar backgrounds and there is a high demand for foster carers from ethnic minority backgrounds. While additional languages/cultural experiences always help enrich a child's experience, we'd need you to be able to speak and write in English.

## Do you need to be religious to foster?

No – we welcome enquiries from people of any or no religious faith. What is important is that you can promote the child's religious belief, regardless of your own.

## My partner is a smoker, can we still foster?

We encourage applicants to be non-smokers. It is Diagrama Fostering's policy not to place children under the age of five in households where there are people who smoke, vape or use e-cigarettes.

## Can I still work while fostering?

In some circumstances you can foster and continue to work, providing you can balance the needs of your foster child/children with your work commitments. If you foster as a couple, one of you will usually be designated the "main" foster carer and the other could then work in another role. Foster carers are expected to be available to care for children, attend meetings, training, support groups, and to promote and support contact between a child and their family.

## I live in a rented flat – would that stand against my fostering application?

No – we only ask that your foster child has their own bedroom, and your home has appropriate, adequate and stable accommodation. You do not need to own your own home to become a foster carer. If you rent your home then you will need to have permission from your landlord which will be sought during the fostering assessment.

**I had some health problems last year – can I still foster?**

Providing your health is stable now and you have the vigour to manage energetic children, then this shouldn't be a problem. If you have a long-standing or

degenerative health condition, we will ask the Diagrama medical advisor to consider this and provide advice. All fostering applicants have a full medical as part of the assessment process.

**I have children already – is that a problem?**

No! Having your own children is a great way to gain the skills and experience you need to become a foster parent. If your children are still at home their needs will be considered when we're matching

you with foster children and young people. Everyone in your household will play a part in making a difference to your foster children, helping them to feel valued.

**We have a pet dog – will we be allowed to foster?**

Family pets can be an asset – providing a therapeutic impact on children and young people. However, every animal is different, and your pets will be assessed as part of the

process of fostering with Diagrama, considering their temperament and behaviour. Local authorities will not place a child with a household that has any breed of dog highlighted within the Dangerous Dogs Act.

**My partner and I plan to move house soon, can we start the assessment process?**

Moving house is a significant life event, which can be stressful, and it would be better for this to happen before the assessment commences and for you to allow time to settle into your new home to be

ready and focused on the assessment before starting. We also encourage applicants to remain in this home for a significant period following approval and the placement of a child given the child would have experienced a considerable number of changes already.

**I have a criminal record- would that prevent me from being able to foster?**

It depends on the type of offence(s) committed, and the context and how long ago this was. We would encourage you to be honest about any offences

and discuss them openly with us. Some foster carers are approved who have committed minor offences. These may have been many years previously in youth or be a one-off, in a particular set of circumstances, which would not necessarily prevent people from fostering. Enhanced DBS checks are carried out and any historical offences committed would need to be discussed with a social worker to establish the impact on the overall assessment to become a foster carer. Certain offences would not be permitted, such as any offence relating to children, violent and sexual offences etc.

**Can I foster if I live with my extended family?**

Living with extended family members can be beneficial and supportive for a single foster carer, but it will be essential those family

members are a part of the assessment process and that they understand the needs of looked after children. This may mean that they attend the preparation course and make themselves available for the time when the child will be introduced to the family and some supervision visits.

**Can I foster a baby or child under 2?**

Most of the babies and pre-school age children needing to be fostered are cared for by the local authorities own foster carers. At Diagrama we tend to get referrals for older school

age children from 5-18. We are looking for foster carers who could do parent and child fostering. This is when the birth parent is in the placement with their child (usually a very young baby but could be a toddler). The parent may need support, teaching parenting skills or an assessment of parenting skills. These placements are often short term from 3-9 months in duration. Additional training will be given to foster carers who are interested in this type of fostering.

**Interested? Call us today on  
0800 802 1910  
for an informal chat.**

[diagramafostering.org.uk](http://diagramafostering.org.uk)



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