



# Information About Becoming an Accredited Carer



## What is an accredited carer?

Accredited carers are **friends or family members** of our foster parents who **support them with their fostering**.

The accredited carer will be **well known**, both to the foster parent and the child or children in their care. Accredited carers provide care to the children whilst their foster parent(s) take a break.

Accredited carers can offer to care for the children for periods ranging from an **overnight stay to a couple of weeks**. This care may take place within the home of the accredited carer or within the home of the child's foster family.

## Why do we have accredited carers?

Foster parents are entitled up to 22 nights of respite each year.

Children in care want to feel they belong and are part of the family, and so it feels natural for children to be cared for by family or close friends who know them well.

It also means they can continue with their routines.

## What's expected of an accredited carer?

- You must be at least **21 years old**.
- You will need to provide **at least 11 nights of respite** care throughout the year.
- You will only look after children who you have an **established relationship** with.
- You will need to complete a **daily record** of the child's day and put this on a shared computer system called Charms.
- You will be expected to undertake some **basic training** to be prepared for this role, including online Safeguarding, First Aid and Record Keeping.

You will also be invited to a **Skills to Foster course** to learn more about fostering.

You will need to make yourself available to **meet with a fostering advisor once a year** for support around your role.



## How do I become an accredited carer?

Once a foster parent has informed us that a family member or close friend are interested in becoming an accredited carer, then one of our fostering social workers will give you a call to discuss this role and answer any questions you may have.

You will then be sent out an application form to complete.

## FOSTERING ASSESSMENT

An assessment will need to be undertaken and this will be completed by a social worker.

This will normally comprise one to two visits to your home to interview you about your life experiences and your knowledge and experience of the children living with the foster parent you will be supporting.

As you already have a relationship with the child or children you will be able to share your insight into their needs.

## SECURE BASE

The assessing social worker will talk to you about an approach foster parents use to provide safety and security to children, and this is called Secure Base.

You can find out more about this model by following this link:

<https://sites.uea.ac.uk/providingasecurebase/these-secure-base-model>

## REFERENCES

**You need to provide us with two personal referees:**

- The foster parents you will be supporting
- Someone who is unrelated to you but can answer questions about the care you provide to children

We will obtain written references from them which will then be followed up by the assessing social worker who will speak to the referees.

We will also seek the views of the children being looked after as well as the views of their social worker.

## BACKGROUND CHECKS

As you will be having responsibility for children in foster care, we need to undertake checks on you and this will include the following:

- **Enhanced DBS** for you and anyone in your household aged 18 and above. If respite is only taking place in the home of the foster parent you're supporting, then only the person or people providing this will need a DBS.
- Reference from a **local authority or fostering agency if you have previously applied** or been approved as a foster parent or adopter.
- **Local authority checks** from the area you live.
- A **medical check** will be undertaken only if there are pre-existing conditions or any concerns in relation to your health.
- If respite will be taking place in your home, then we need to make sure your home is safe and secure for a child and a **health and safety check** will be undertaken. This will include seeing evidence that there has been an annual boiler check at your home.
- If you will be transporting children in your car, then your **driving licence, MOT and insurance details** will also need to be seen.

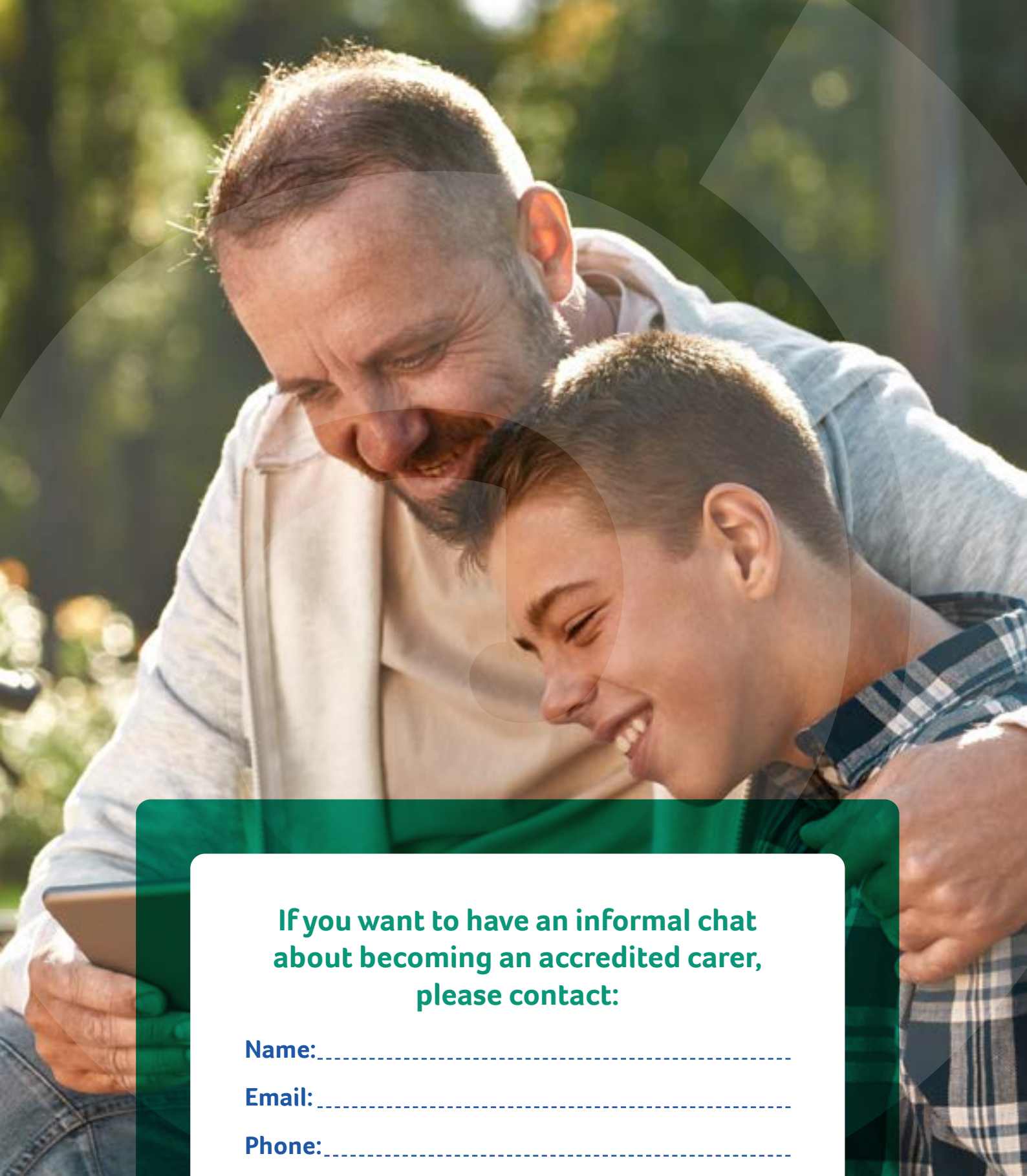
The completed report is then submitted to a fostering social worker for approval.





## What support is available to accredited carers?

- This is a paid role and the basic rate is **£66.91 per night**.
- You will have access to **all training** provided to our foster parents.
- You will have a **fostering advisor** allocated to support you in your role.
- You will be **supported to use Charms** to input your daily recordings.
- Documents that you need to be familiar with will be explained to you by the foster parent you're supporting and a Fostering Advisor. This includes things such as Safer Caring Plan, Risk Assessments, and confidentiality.



**If you want to have an informal chat  
about becoming an accredited carer,  
please contact:**

**Name:** .....

**Email:** .....

**Phone:** .....



**fostering  
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