

Adoption and fostering in Surrey



www.surreycc.gov.uk



SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

Making Surrey a better place

This leaflet aims to help you understand the differences between fostering and adoption, allowing you to make the choice that's right for you and your family.

What is adoption?

Adoption is when a child is unable to live with their birth parents and legal ties with the birth family ends. Once a suitable adoptive family is found and the legal order has been made, the adoptive parents will hold full parental responsibility for the child, meaning they have the authority to make all important and day-to-day decisions for the child. Once this happens the birth parents no longer have parental responsibility.

Will the child keep their birth surname?

No, once they have been adopted they will assume the surname of their new family.

Will the child continue contact with their birth family?

This will depend on the circumstances of the adoption, however in many instances this could be through an exchange of letters via a third party.



How old are the children waiting for adoption?

Most are aged between 18 months and 7 years, although adoption is possible for any child or young person up to the age of 18.

Adoption lasts for the child's whole life!

For further information about adoption visit our website: www.surreycc.gov.uk/adoption or call 08000 96 96 26.



What is long-term fostering?

This is when foster carers have a child on a long-term basis. Typically the child will live with them from the ages of 7 until they reach adulthood. The child continues to be “looked after” by Surrey County Council, which means they receive regular social worker visits and reviews.

Once you have become a foster carer and you have opted to foster a child long-term, depending on the needs of the child, you may be able to apply for a Special Guardianship Order (SGO).

What is Special guardianship?

Special guardianship sits between fostering and adoption giving the special guardian parental responsibility as a result of a court order (SGO), which lasts until the child is 18. A special guardian will have a greater share of parental responsibility and can make most decisions about the child independently of anyone else. If a child lives with a special guardian, they keep their legal ties to their birth family and are no longer “looked after” by Surrey County Council.

Adoption or Long-Term Fostering – which is for you?

- Do you want to become parents or complete your family? Then adoption is probably right for you.
- Do you want to work with Surrey County Council to give the child a home until they reach adulthood and receive an allowance? Then long-term fostering is probably right for you.

Will I receive an allowance?

Foster carers receive a weekly allowance for each child placed, and in some instances means tested allowances are available also to adopters and special guardians.

Still not sure which is right for you?

Come along to one of our information evenings held monthly and find out more.

For further information about fostering, visit our website:

www.surreycc.gov.uk/fostering

or ring our enquiries line on **08000 96 96 26**.

