

A Guide To Service



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Using this Guide

This guide is to help you find out about Foster Care Associates Cymru.

Welcome

Welcome to Foster Care Associates (FCA). We hope you are getting to know your foster family and that you will feel safe and enjoy your time with FCA.

What is FCA?

FCA was set up for children and young people who need to be fostered. We find people who want to be foster parents and train and support them.

Who works at FCA?

As well as foster parents we have different members of staff and you can find out about them and what they do in this guide.

What is Fostering?

Fostering is a way of offering children and young people a home while their own family is unable to look after them. Fostering can be a temporary arrangement, and many fostered children return to their own families. Children who cannot return home but still want to stay in touch with their families often live in long-term foster care and have continued support from their local authority or health and social care trust. Foster parents never have parental responsibility for a child that they care for.

Matching

We have a matching process to ensure foster parents can meet the needs of each child or young person who is going to live with them.

Placement plans are prepared and agreed for each child or young person. We provide welcome books with pictures of the foster family and wherever possible introductions are arranged before the move.

Our Mission – to provide quality care in a family setting.

Our Vision – to make a positive and lasting difference for children and families.

Our Values – we work hard to achieve our vision by following clear values. Our values apply to everything we do, whenever we do it and include the following:

Passionate about Realising Potential – we remain true to our founders' belief in quality care for children and families.

Ambition for Children – we want children to have a sense of belonging and security within a family environment.

People Matter – we believe that every person counts and is accountable.

Safe Change – we appreciate the need for change and work with pace and creativity.

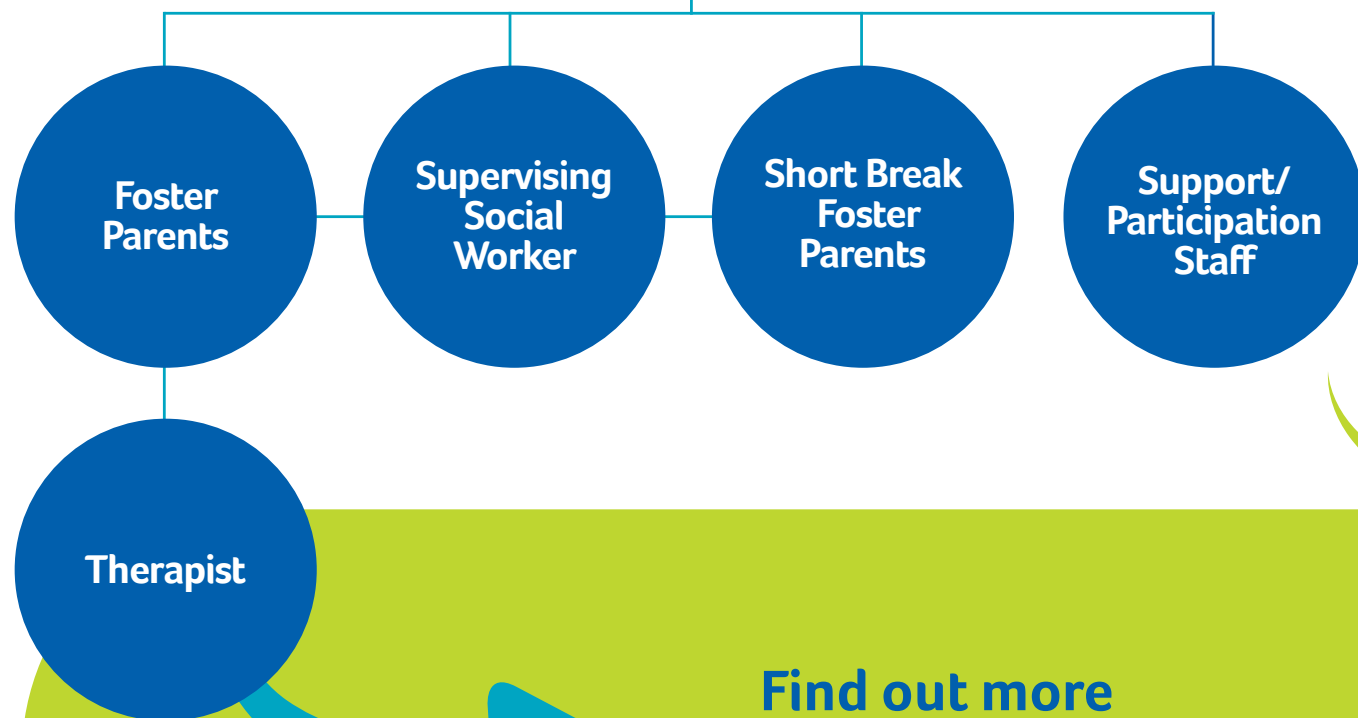
Building Communities – we believe we can achieve more by working together.



FCA Services: How We Can Help

As well as training and supporting your foster parents, FCA provides other people you may hear about.

**Child or
Young
Person**



Therapist

**Find out more
about them on
the next page.**

So what do these people do?

Supervising Social Worker

- Supervise and support foster parents.
- Visit regularly.
- See the bedroom and check children and young people are happy and cared for and well looked after.

Short Break Foster Parent

- Provide a break for children and young people and foster parents if needed.

Support/Participation staff

- Help children and young people to get involved in activities.
- Help children and young people to achieve new things and develop new skills.
- Help children and young people to have their opinion heard.
- Keep children and young people informed of what is happening in FCA.
- Organise events for children and young people to attend.

We have developed an animation video to share with you that explains what an IRO and advocate are, who everyone in FCA is, what their role is and how their job helps you. Your social worker or a member of the Participation Team will share this with you when they come out to visit you.

Therapist

- Sometimes children and young people may not be able to fully explain how what has happened in the past may have affected them. Therapists can help foster parents and social workers to understand. They give them ideas to help.
- Sometimes FCA may provide a therapist for children and young people but this is more likely to be provided by somebody outside FCA.

**FCA SUPERVISING
SOCIAL WORKER:**

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TEL:
.....

EMAIL:
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**IF YOU WANT
TO KNOW MORE
JUST ASK!**

There are also some other people who are not employed by FCA, but who are there to help you – have a look at the next few pages for info.



Other people outside FCA who you will hear about and are there to help you

Social Worker

Let them know what you think, they will:

- Talk to children and young people and their foster parents and make a plan for how they will care for them (placement plan). They should share the foster parents welcome book with children and young people before they move so that they can see where they will be going. Unless it's an emergency they will arrange a meeting before the move.
- Tell children and young people and foster parents what decisions they can make without asking permission.
- Tell children and young people and foster parents how to make a complaint if they are unhappy and get someone to speak up for them if they like.
- Arrange meetings about how things are going.
- Talk to children and young people about the future and make plans.

Their job is to get to know you, plan how you're going to be looked after and make sure you're being cared for properly.

- Must be from the child's home area
- Must listen
- Must visit at least every six weeks for the first year of the placement.

YOUR SOCIAL WORKER:

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TEL:

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EMAIL:

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Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)

Message to Children and Young People

Your IRO will:

- Arrange regular meetings to review the plan for you.
- Make sure the plan for your care (care plan) is good.
- Make sure everyone involved is doing their job properly.
- Find out how you are getting on before the review meeting.
- Have a duty to make sure the care plan is working in your best interest.



Your Social Worker should give you a copy of your care plan, or explain why they won't give you a copy.

YOUR IRO:

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TEL:

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EMAIL:

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Advocate

Message to Children and Young People

The law says that social workers and other adults should listen to your wishes and feelings about your care.

If you are unhappy about something to do with your care or education you have a right to an advocate.

They are there just for you – they will act and speak on your behalf

Some young people are happy to speak up for themselves – others find it harder.

They can help you with: your social worker, contact with your family, bullying, being suddenly moved from your foster home, or help you in meetings.

Both the services below run an advocacy helpline for looked after children and care leavers in Wales and will help you find an advocate.

National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS):

0808 808 1001
youngpeople.nyas.net
Email: help@nyas.net

Children in Wales:

029 2034 2434
childreninwales.org.uk

Independent Visitor

Message to Children and Young People

If you have limited or no family contact, the law says that you are entitled to have an independent visitor.

What is an independent visitor?

A reliable independent person who can visit you regularly and get to know you. They can be a good adult role model.

What can you do?

They can go out with you and you can do activities together – this could be a coffee and chat, cinema trips or sports. They can attend your review meeting if you agree to this.

For more information:

Speak to your social worker or foster parent.

Get involved with FCA

We want the voice of children and young people and foster parents to be heard so that we can make FCA better for everyone:

1. Give feedback about events, staff and FCA – You can give us your comments at any time but foster parents, children and young people will always be asked to give their views at the time of the foster parents' annual review. There will also be other surveys and forms you will be asked to complete during the year.
2. Help us with interviews and training for staff and foster parents.
3. Come and get involved in activities.
4. Take part in meetings and groups and tell us what you think.

Ask your Supervising Social Worker / Participation Worker for more information



YOUR PARTICIPATION OFFICER CONTACT DETAILS:

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Notes

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Stay Safe

Message to Children and Young People

Safe & Happy

It is our aim at FCA for all children & young people to be 'Safe & Happy'.

All our social workers and foster parent's receive training to ensure they have the skills to ensure this happens. If you are involved in an incident, for example you have had to attend hospital, you have been missing, or have had to be held to keep you and/or others safe; your foster parents will report this as soon as it has happened. We then make sure that we have done everything that is needed and we will record and report this to the adults who need to know to ensure you receive a high standard of care.



Keeping Safe

Everyone at FCA will work to make sure you are safe and not harmed in any way, but if you are harmed or if there is an allegation or suspicion of abuse, we will have to tell children's services or the police. If you are being hurt or have been in the past and no one knows about it, speak to an adult you trust (foster parent, FCA social worker, teacher). They will listen to what you are saying and take it seriously.

The person you tell will discuss what's happening next with you, but they will have to tell someone else to make sure you are safe and well.

Bullying

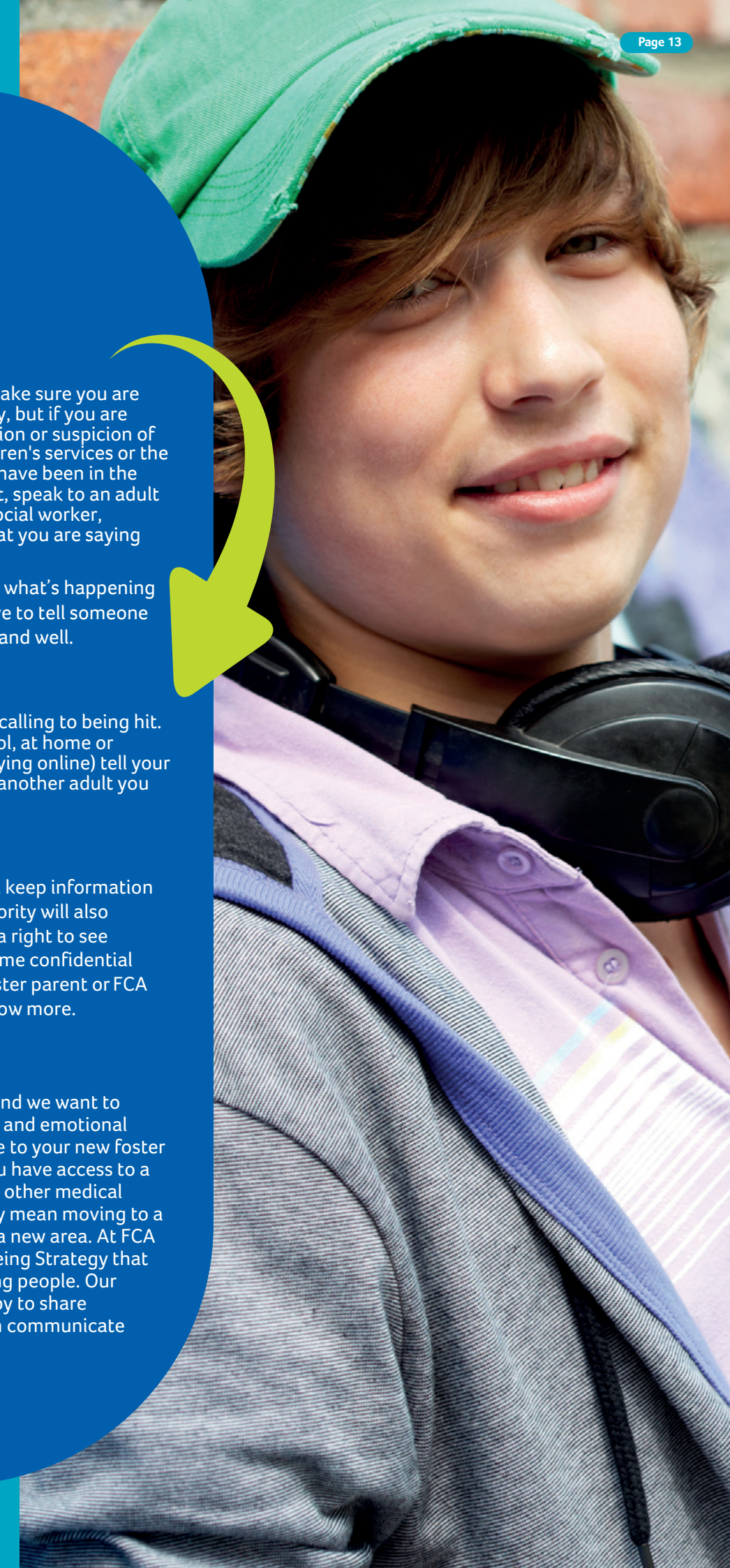
Bullying can range from name calling to being hit. If you are being bullied in school, at home or anywhere (including cyber bullying online) tell your social worker, foster parent or another adult you can trust.

Information

While you are with FCA, we will keep information about you, and your local authority will also keep files about you. You have a right to see the information (apart from some confidential information). Speak to your foster parent or FCA social worker if you want to know more.

Health

Your health is very important and we want to ensure that all of your physical and emotional needs are met. When you move to your new foster parents they will make sure you have access to a doctor, dentist, optician or any other medical professional required. This may mean moving to a new one if you have moved to a new area. At FCA we also have a Health & Wellbeing Strategy that we are developing for our young people. Our participation team will be happy to share information about this and can communicate using Makaton if required.



Internet & Mobile Safety

WWW.THINKUKNOW.CO.UK

Message to Children and Young People

The internet and mobile phones can be great for loads of reasons, but sometimes the internet and social media can be misused and harmful. Take care how you use the internet.

If you are worried about who you are talking to, report them, never agree to meet someone in real life if you have met them online.

Think before you post

Only connect with friends

Keep your settings private

Don't share your password

Don't be hurtful towards others

Be kind to others

Memory Box/Bag

Message to Children and Young People

You will receive a memory box or bag (if you haven't already) that you can use to keep a record of your time with FCA and somewhere to keep your sentimental items.

There are lots of things you can put in your memory box or bag, some ideas are:

- PHOTOS
- USED TICKETS (E.G. CINEMA TICKETS)
- PAINTINGS/ DRAWINGS
- CELEBRATION CARDS
- INVITATIONS
- CERTIFICATES
- LETTERS
- MEDAL/ AWARD

In fact any relevant items that are suitable can be placed in the box / bag and looked back on when you are older to remind you of your time with FCA and your foster parents.



Welsh Language

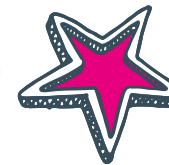


FCA values the Welsh heritage, language & culture. We recognise how important it is that we support children and young people, and our foster parents to communicate in their preferred language. When you are in our care you can have access to Welsh language lessons if you wish, you will have access to all our resources written in Welsh and will be invited along to activities and events to celebrate the language and culture. Our Guide to the Service is also available in Welsh, along with a widget guide to the service.



Developing Skills

At FCA we want to make sure you are able to learn lots of new skills, information and advice to help prepare for when you become an adult. You will naturally learn and develop on a day to day basis with your foster parent, for example money management. Your foster parent will provide you with pocket money and will help you work towards managing your money independently. FCA also have a programme we will invite you to when the time is right which covers a range of topics such as relationships, health, money and menu planning.





Education Without Compromise

We believe that a good education is one of the most important things to help you have a positive future.

- We will always be ambitious about your education and try to help you reach your full potential.
- We will provide you with opportunities to develop your skills and to think about your future and possible jobs and careers.
- We will try to arrange extra support for you when you need it.
- We will support your foster parents to help you get the best from your education.
- We will expect your foster parents to attend education meetings with you and make sure your views are heard.
- We will provide your foster parents with information and training to make sure that they are up to date on all educational matters.

Foster parents and children and young people can ask to see their records at any time.

Message to Children and Young People

If you are unhappy

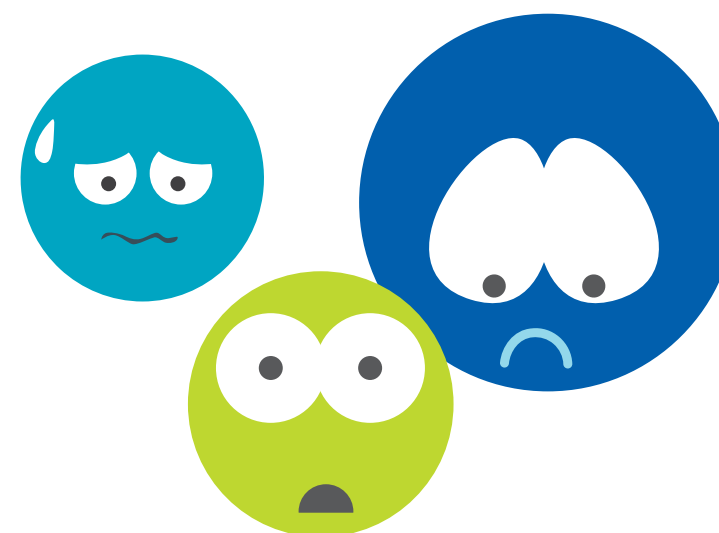
Sometimes it can be difficult living in a foster family and there can be misunderstandings, difficulties and problems. Talking about why you are angry or upset can help sort things out.

If you are unhappy about things such as:

- Feeling as though you are being treated unfairly, or wrong decisions being made
- The rules of your home
- Not being listened to
- Problems at school

In these cases, tell someone else:

- foster parent
- social worker
- teacher
- friend
- advocate
- support worker



How can we help?

If you feel unhappy about something related to FCA it is important to voice your concern. You may want to consider making a complaint.

Don't worry about making a complaint to FCA, it is your right and you won't get into trouble. We like to hear your concerns and complaints as this can sometimes help us to improve our services for children and young people.

To make a complaint, you can fill in a complaints form (if you haven't got one you can ask anyone from FCA).

You can also ring 01527 556480 or email contactus@thefca.co.uk to say you want to make a complaint.

They will advise you and help you find someone to support you if you wish. They will also tell you what to expect at any stage of your complaint.

Useful Contacts

Childline

Childline is a private and confidential service for children and young people up to the age of 19. You can contact a childline counsellor about anything – no problem is too big or too small.

Tel: 0800 1111, or go to childline.org.uk.

Talk to Frank

Friendly, confidential drugs advice.

Tel: 0300 123 6600 or go to talktofrank.com or text 82111.

Young Minds

A charity committed to improving the well-being and mental health of children and young people.

Go to youngminds.org.uk.

Brook

Free and confidential advice about sexual health and well-being for under 25s.

Go to brook.org.uk.

FCA Cymru

Registered Manager: April Newman

Tel: 01792 315800

Email: April.Newman@thefca.co.uk

Responsible Individual: Jo August

Tel: 01527 556 480

Email: jo.august@polariscommunity.co.uk

CLASS Cymru

CLASS Cymru provide clear, concise advice and signposting to relevant sources of support and information. Covering the whole timeline from considering a university degree through to what to do when you graduate, this bilingual resource provides care-experienced people and those who support them with a one-stop-shop for finding the key information necessary to simplify this process.

Go to: <https://classcymru.co.uk/about-us/>

OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS:

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Statement of Purpose

The statement of purpose explains more about FCA.

It tells you about:

- The people who work for FCA
- How we find foster parents and how we train and support them to look after children and young people
- What help and support we can offer
- More about how to make a complaint

Most of this information is in this guide, but if you want to know more you can ask for a copy of the Statement of Purpose. It is also available on the FCA website www.thefca.co.uk





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