



Flourish
Fostering



Guide to Parent & Child Fostering



www.flourishfostering.co.uk

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Welcome

Thank you for considering becoming a parent and child foster parent with Flourish. My colleagues and I started this small (but mighty) company in 2019 after our experiences in fostering services and our knowledge of therapeutic parenting showed us that there was more that could be done for vulnerable young people.

Providing a home for parents of children or babies who need guidance and support on parenting in those early months and years is vital work and can provide children with the best start possible.

At Flourish, our mission is to provide foster parents with the support and knowledge they need to have a real impact on the lives of young people who have experienced trauma. Parent and child foster parents play an essential role by performing parenting assessments on parents caring for their young children or babies.

The role of a parent and child foster parent is complex and requires a lot of record-keeping and observations. For this reason, it is considered a specialist role.

In this guide, we'll go over the basics of parent and child fostering, what commitment is required, how we ensure it remains therapeutic, as well as looking at the training opportunities available and the payment structure.

Parent and child assessments are essential to safeguard the well-being of young children and I'm thrilled that you're considering Flourish for your fostering journey.

MICA DOUGLAS

Co-Founder and Clinical Director at Flourish Fostering



What is a Parent & Child Foster Parent?



Parent and child foster parents are **specialists who contribute to assessments on parents when concerns have been raised on their ability to raise their child safely.**

These concerns have usually been raised by the legal system and an **assessment is required to determine if the child can stay with their parent(s).** The social worker is responsible for the assessment but the foster parent will **keep diaries and observations on what the parent(s) are doing well or need help with.**

During this assessment, either one or both parents will move into your home with their young child. **Your role is to observe them and write detailed reports about their behaviour and their interactions with their child.** These reports will then be presented to the courts after the assessment, which is **usually 12 weeks.**

This work requires a balance of compassion and professionalism. It's essential to create an environment where parents feel supported and encouraged, even while being observed. Parents may feel vulnerable or defensive, and **building trust is key to helping them engage in the process and make positive changes.**

Throughout the assessment period, **you may also serve as a mentor, modelling and teaching effective parenting techniques.** This can include demonstrating nurturing interactions, guiding parents on creating routines, and advising on child safety.

This role can be **challenging, but it is also profoundly rewarding.** By contributing to the assessment process, you play a vital part in shaping a child's future—whether by ensuring they remain with a parent who is capable of providing a safe and loving home or by advocating for alternative arrangements if necessary.

The ultimate goal is always the child's well-being, providing them with the best possible start in life.

What Does a Parent & Child Foster Parent Do?

Parent and child foster parents take on a unique role that combines care, guidance, and observation. This is not just about opening your home but about helping a family find its way while always putting the child's safety and well-being first.



Your main task is to **watch and document** how the parent cares for their child. This includes looking at how they handle feeding, nappy changes, playtime, and how they respond when things don't go to plan—like when the baby is crying and they're struggling to calm them. **It's about noticing both the big moments and the small details that show how they're doing as a parent.**

But it's not just about observation. You're also there to **guide the parent**. Many parents in this situation haven't had positive role models or might feel completely out of their depth. You might need to show them how to prepare a bottle properly, explain why routines are important, or help them understand what their baby's cries mean. **It's about teaching in a supportive, non-judgmental way, so they feel encouraged to improve and gain confidence.**

Throughout the assessment, you'll write **detailed diaries** based on what you've observed. These reports will be used to help the court make decisions, so they need to be **factual and unbiased**. It's not your role to decide whether the parent is fit to care for their child but to **provide a clear and honest account of what you've seen**.

By giving parents the tools to succeed—or by helping to ensure a child's safety when they can't—you're making a lasting difference in a child's life.

How is Parent & Child Fostering Therapeutic?

Parent and child fostering isn't just about assessment—it's also an opportunity for...



At Flourish Fostering, we believe that with **the right environment, tailored support, and genuine compassion, anyone can overcome past traumas and begin to flourish.** This principle is at the heart of what makes this type of fostering so therapeutic.

For some parents, their own upbringing didn't equip them with the tools to parent effectively. They might have experienced neglect, abuse, or instability, leaving them unsure of how to provide the love and care their child needs. By welcoming them into your home, **you're giving them a safe space to start again.** It's a chance to learn, grow, and begin to see that they are capable of change.

The time and space to focus on their relationship with their child can also be transformative. **For some parents, life has been so chaotic that they've struggled to connect with their baby.** In a stable environment, without distractions, they can **start to build that bond.** Small moments, like learning to soothe a crying baby or playing peek-a-boo, can become stepping stones toward a **healthier, happier relationship.**

We recognize that growth doesn't happen overnight. It takes time, patience, and consistent support. That's why this role is so important. By **offering guidance with empathy and kindness,** you're **helping parents** confront their challenges while giving them the **tools to succeed—not just for now, but for the future.**

Who Are We Looking For?

At Flourish Fostering, we're looking for **individuals and families who are ready to make a real difference in the lives of both parents and children**. The work can be challenging, but it is incredibly rewarding. We're **looking for those who can provide a safe, supportive, and compassionate environment**—people who understand that with the right guidance and support, **anyone can overcome past difficulties and start to flourish**.

You **don't need to have a perfect background or extensive experience in fostering**, but you do need to be someone who can offer **patience, empathy, and consistency**. You should be ready to step in as a role model, guiding parents as they learn and grow in their ability to care for their child. It's not about judging their past—it's about **supporting them in their journey to becoming the best parent they can be**.

If you have a **genuine desire to help others**, a **calm and patient approach**, and the **ability to provide tailored support** for families in need, we want to hear from you. At Flourish Fostering, **we believe in creating opportunities for growth and healing**—and we need people like you to help make that happen.

What Skills Do You Need?

As a parent and child foster parent, you will need strong **observational skills** to notice both subtle and overt behaviours, as well as **excellent written communication** to convey these observations clearly and thoroughly in your reports.

This role also involves **working as part of a team**. You'll be in regular contact with social workers and other professionals involved in the case, and **your input will be vital in helping everyone understand what's best for the child**.



How do I Become a Parent & Child Foster Parent?

Before we can place a vulnerable child and parent in your home, you and other members of your household will need to undergo **comprehensive checks and training** to ensure that your home will be a safe and nurturing environment for the young person.

The process typically **takes between 3-6 months** and can be quite intrusive. We will need to speak to your friends, family as well as people from your past.

These checks are **essential for the safety of the parent, their child, and yourself** and while it may seem daunting, it's important to remember that you'll be supported by our team every step of the way.



What Are The Steps To Becoming a Parent & Child Foster Parent?

Home Visit

The first step after enquiring is for us to organise a visit to meet you in your home. This is a good opportunity to discuss further and get answers to any questions you may have.

Application Form

If we feel that you would be a good fit for Flourish, we will give you an application form to complete.

Training and Checks

While various documents are checked and references are contacted, you'll be invited to attend some training. The first training you will attend is called Introduction to Fostering and is compulsory for all prospective foster parents. After that, you will begin to be invited to our therapeutic training sessions so you can start to learn the Flourish way and be invited to parent and child training.

Form F Assessment

Together with your social work assessor you will complete a form F assessment. This is a collaborative document that tells your story and why you would be a great parent and child foster parent.

Panel and Approval

Your form F is presented to a panel who make a recommendation on whether you should be approved



What Fees And Allowances Are Available?

We train our foster parents to be **experts in therapeutic practice**. Because of this added level of training, we provide them with **generous weekly payments**.

Our foster parents also benefit from **progression opportunities**, with their weekly payments increasing based on their **time with us** and the **training they've attended**.

Payments to foster parents are made up of two different payments.

One is called the **professional fee**; this is the payment **for the foster parent for providing the care**.

The other payment is called the **allowance**; this payment is to **support the additional cost** of having a extra people in their home and will **contribute towards bills and food**.

Parent and child fostering is a highly specialised role; therefore you will receive enhanced fees and allowances for the care you provide.



What Training Will You Get?



With Flourish, you're not just receiving training—you're becoming part of a community that is committed to helping parents and children thrive

At Flourish, you can always **count on our industry-leading training** to give you the knowledge and skills you need to succeed. We believe that the right training makes all the difference, which is why **we provide comprehensive, tailored programs that cover everything from parenting strategies to how to document and report your observations effectively.**

Our training is designed to ensure you feel **confident and equipped** to take on the role of supporting both parents and children. We cover essential topics like **child development, attachment theory, trauma-informed care, and understanding the challenges that parents may face.** You'll also receive practical guidance on how to **manage difficult situations** and how to offer the **right level of support and compassion.**

We don't just leave you to figure things out on your own. **At Flourish, ongoing support is key.** You'll have access to a **team of experienced professionals** who are there for you every step of the way—whether you need advice, guidance, or someone to talk to. **We want you to feel empowered in your role,** knowing that you're never alone in your journey.