Flourish Fostering

Guide for Transferring Families

www.flourishfostering.co.uk

Contents:

1 Introduction

2 Should I Be Thinking About Transferring?

3 Important Things To Know About Transferring

4 What makes Flourish a truly therapeutic fostering service?

5 How Does Transferring Work?

6 Transferring With a Child in Your Care

7 Lorraine's Transferring Story

9 Next steps...

Welcome

I understand that thinking about transferring can feel overwhelming, especially if you're already caring for a child. This guide is here to offer some clarity and reassurance, and hopefully bring a bit of light to what might be an uncertain time. Whatever stage you're at, we're here to support you.

My partners and I started Flourish in 2019 after we realised the therapeutic side of fostering was no longer being prioritised, and our efforts to provide therapeutic care were not being fairly matched with resources. This led us to create Flourish, a ***truly therapeutic*** service that puts vulnerable young people and their foster parents first.
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.

This guide will answer all of your questions about transferring to Flourish. Including: Should I transfer? Why should I choose Flourish? What do I need to know about transferring? Is now the right time to transfer? And more.
You'll be able to read the story of one of our fostering families who made the switch to Flourish and have never looked back.

I am thrilled that you are considering transferring to Flourish. We look forward to hopefully speaking with you soon.

MICA DOUGLAS

Co-Founder and Clinical Director
at Flourish Fostering

Should I Be Thinking About Transferring?

If you're reading this, chances are that something has been feeling a bit 'off' in your current situation. Maybe the support isn't what it used to be, or you've simply found yourself wondering if things could be better. But if something doesn't feel right, it's probably worth paying attention to; it may be time to listen to your gut.

> **If something doesn't feel right, it's probably worth paying attention to.**

Your current agency might have been a good fit at one point. But if you're facing unanswered calls, unclear communication, or feeling isolated and undervalued, it's okay to acknowledge that your needs have shifted.

Transferring can feel daunting, but you deserve to feel supported, heard, and respected. You deserve relevant training led by experts, supervisions that empower you, a team that sticks with you and a therapeutic fostering service that treats you as a professional.

There's no pressure to make a decision right away. But if you've been thinking about it for a while, trust that there's probably a reason. Listening to that instinct could be the first step towards finding the right support for both you and the children in your care.

Important Things To Know About Transferring

YOU CAN TRANSFER WITH THE CHILD YOU'RE CARING FOR

It is possible to transfer whilst you have a child in your care. As long as the child's local authority are in agreement and the child does not lose out by transferring.

BUILD ON YOUR EXISTING KNOWLEDGE & QUALIFICATIONS

Once you transfer to Flourish, you will be offered a variety of expert-led therapeutic parenting courses. If you want to gain qualifications in therapeutic parenting, we offer levels 3 and 5 diplomas in Therapeutic Parenting.

Already got some qualifications in therapeutic parenting?
At Flourish, we can help you develop your knowledge further; Whether that is through qualifications or just attending our therapeutic training courses.

YOU CAN TALK TO FLOURISH WITHOUT NOTIFYING YOUR AGENCY

You're free to research and enquire about as many other agencies as you like, and it's important that you do, so that you find the right fit for you. The only time you need to talk to your current organisation is when you are ready to apply to us, at which point you will need to provide them with a letter letting them know your intentions. Flourish can help you write this.

YOU WILL NOT BE FINANCIALLY WORSE OFF

Not only will we always match your current provider's payments, we will add extra on top **and** we'll provide you with extra financial support for festivals and celebrations, a clothing allowance and other allowances, too!

What makes Flourish a truly therapeutic fostering service?

If you're anything like us, you may have heard the phrase 'therapeutic fostering' being used **a LOT.** However, we strongly believe that many other organisations are not truly therapeutic. Flourish was founded on the basis that we are a small, therapeutic organisation.

There isn't one thing, one therapist, or one social worker that makes Flourish therapeutic; it is the model that we have created that underpins everything we do, from training and support, to the relationships we create with each other.

At Flourish, our foster parents are trained by industry experts and supported by our in-house therapy team to look past the behaviour and to empathise with the young person's experiences.

We offer robust training and 24/7 support to ensure that the golden thread of therapeutic fostering runs throughout our service.

At Flourish Fostering, we believe that high-quality training is the foundation of exceptional care. Our foster parents have access to an innovative programme designed to develop both confidence and skill in supporting children who have experienced trauma. Every aspect of our training is informed by decades of professional experience and the latest research in child development, attachment, and therapeutic practice.

> "Our Therapeutic Model underpins everything we do, from training and support, to the relationships we create with each other"

How Does Transferring Work?

If you are thinking about transferring to Flourish, there are a few steps to complete. However, there are far fewer than when you first become a foster parent, as a lot of the information is transferable.

STAGE 1 - THE ENQUIRY

The first thing to do is get in touch with us to let us know you have been considering transferring and would like some more information. Someone from Flourish will be happy to answer any questions you might have.

STAGE 2 - THE INITIAL VISIT

Now that you have some information about Flourish and you want to proceed, we'll book a visit so we can get to know each other and chat about the next steps.

STAGE 3 - THE APPLICATION & ASSESSMENT

If you decide to transfer to us, we'll help you let your current organisation know. This is called a notice of intent to transfer (NOI). Then, once we have a copy of the NOI, we'll start your transfer report. This shouldn't take longer than 8 weeks.

STAGE 4 - THE PANEL

Once your transfer report is complete, we will invite you to join us and our panel who will review your application and then make a recommendation to our Agency Decision Maker.

STAGE 5 - THE TRANSFER

Once you have been approved by us, you will need to officially resign from your current organisation. After this, you will automatically be transferred to Flourish within 28 days, but this may be sooner if you do not have a child currently placed.

If you have a copy of your Form F, we do not repeat it. We'll complete a shorter transfer report focussing on your fostering experience

Transferring With a Child in Your Care.

If you're thinking about transferring to Flourish and you currently have a child in your care, the process is a little different because we have to make sure that the child's welfare comes first.

When you send your notice of intent to your current agency, you'll also need to send a copy to the child's placing authority, and we will help you do this.

Within 28 days of that notice being received, a protocol meeting will take place. You, your current agency, and Flourish will all be involved. The aim of the meeting is to make sure that a move to Flourish would be in the child's best interest, that we can support their needs well, and that the transfer won't disrupt their wellbeing or progress.

> We have to make sure that the child's welfare comes first.

Lorraine's Transferring Story

> "I wanted to find a provider more in tune with me"

Lorraine has been a foster parent for over 11 years. In that time, she has cared for 6 young people, mostly those with mental health needs and a young man who had been in the criminal justice system.

But even with all her experience, she began to feel uncertain about her future in fostering during her experience with her local authority, thinking there must be more that could be done to support such vulnerable children.

"I wanted to find a provider more in tune with me and one that had the resources to meet the needs of the child"

She recalled reaching out for support but being met with silence.

"I was calling for help, and nobody was answering. You shouldn't have to beg for support. It got to a point where I just couldn't do it anymore."

Lorraine felt that the deeper, emotional needs of the children she was caring for were being overlooked, which didn't sit right with her.

Finding a therapeutic home

After a warm, open conversation with someone from the Flourish team, she decided to explore transferring, and she could tell right away that Flourish was a bit different than what she was used to.

"It felt like I was being listened to right from the start. It was just so refreshing that somebody actually wanted to have a proper conversation with me and wasn't on the defensive."

She learned that Flourish was a therapeutic fostering service, and that made all the difference. Flourish's whole approach is centred around understanding the behaviours and needs of young people, rather than trying to manage or contain them.

"I feel like I'm with people that actually know what fostering is and they've got the same ethos as me."

For Lorraine, the process of transferring to Flourish was clear and supportive. She didn't feel judged or rushed.

"The Form F process was really easy and really inclusive. The social worker was open and honest and I could be open and honest too."

Most importantly, she felt safe to be herself.

"From the get-go, I felt supported. I didn't feel like a number anymore, I felt like a person."

Support that makes a difference

Since transferring, Lorraine has seen a real shift in her confidence and in her day-to-day fostering experience. She describes the Flourish team as "a proper team" – one that understands trauma and is always there when needed.

"They just get it. You don't have to explain everything; some things don't even need words."

At Flourish, every foster parent has access to therapeutic support and ongoing reflective practice. For Lorraine, this has created a completely different kind of environment.

"I don't need to worry. I know if I need something, I can call and someone will be there. That's how it should be."

She feels fully aligned with Flourish's therapeutic values and supported in a way that feels meaningful and consistent.

"I feel like I've got my confidence back."

For anyone considering a transfer

Lorraine wants other foster parents to know that if they're not feeling supported, they don't have to stay in that situation.

"I think if you're questioning the level of support you're getting, then something's not right. You should feel part of something, you shouldn't feel like you're battling on your own."

Looking back, she's confident that transferring to Flourish was the right decision.

"It was a big decision, but it's the best thing I've done. I'm settled now, I'm not looking over my shoulder, and I know I'm in the right place."

Next steps...

We'd love to have you as part of the Flourish Family.

If you're ready to start transferring to Flourish, the first thing you need to do is let us know! You can get in touch with us via any of the below.

HOW CAN YOU GET IN TOUCH?

- The enquiry form on our website at **www.flourishfostering.co.uk**
- By email at **hello@flourishfostering.co.uk**
- Call us on Tel. **01634 969 050** | Mob. **07767 806 310**
- Book a call with us via **this link**

MAYBE IN THE FUTURE?

Deciding to transfer can take a lot of time and consideration. If you love the idea of fostering with Flourish but you need a bit more time to weigh up your options, there are some ways you can stay in touch with us.

Follow us on social media: Stay up to date with us on Facebook and Instagram.

Have an informal chat: Even if you're not ready to transfer to us yet, our friendly team would be happy to answer any questions or assist you in any way they can. You won't be committing to anything by getting in touch with us, but we'd love to hear from you.

Discover *truly* therapeutic fostering

www.flourishfostering.co.uk