

Challenge, reward, best job...

Leeds City Council is on the look-out for people who have the right skills, time and space, to make a real difference to children and young people in Leeds.

The council is looking to recruit a variety of foster carers, specifically for young people aged 11 and over, large sibling groups and children with complex needs.

Could you foster a teenager?

Fostering a teenager can be a challenging but extremely rewarding thing to do. Many people can make successful foster carers for teenagers, including single people, couples, and gay and lesbian carers. What is important is that they share a genuine enjoyment in working with teenagers and a commitment to promoting their welfare and helping them become independent adults.

Leeds City Council is the second largest local authority in England, we arrange care and support for around 1,250 children and young people who have been separated from their birth families. Some of our children and young people will have experienced significant neglect or abuse. They need love, safety, security and stable homes where they can stay for a few days, weeks, months, years or longer as part of a family.

We don't have enough local authority foster carers to meet the needs of all these children, so we really need to hear from you if you might be able to provide a home or a place to stay for a child, whether that be through short or long-term fostering.

Fostering can be challenging, but also incredibly rewarding, as people who've already done it say...

Jenny and Mike live in North West of Leeds. They have four grown up children between them. At the moment they are providing long term foster care to three girls, ages nine, thirteen and eighteen.

"Being a foster carer you need to have a big heart, patience, commitment and a non-judgemental approach" says Jenny.

Having personal experience of the care system made Jenny realise later on in life that she could offer foster care to children from all different types of backgrounds and circumstances and would be good at it. Jenny knew that she had the patience, commitment, a non-judgemental approach and support to care for children and families who needed it at times of trouble and difficulty.

"Fostering at times feels like I'm on a rollercoaster, and I am not sure what's around the next bend. I have found being honest and admitting when times are tough and I need extra support. So that I can be given the right support and advice to be able to provide the best care and support to the child or young person, never be afraid to say you need help". Says Jenny.

Jenny and Mike have found using foster carer support groups a valuable resource and good networking tool. They attend monthly support groups for foster carers, an all schemes support group aimed at all types of carers, training and development courses when places are available. They also have regular contact with their Fostering Support Worker and Therapeutic Support Team.

One of Jenny and Mike's foster children had been a young offender, seeking the best support, advice and training Jenny and Mike have supported him through a very difficult time

to deal with issues in his life. This helped him to move on in life, achieve his goals and attend university. He now has a family of his own.

“One of our proudest moments was seeing one of our foster children find out she was successful gaining a university place, despite all the difficulties she had gone through in her life”. Says Jenny and Mike.

Jenny and Mike make sure that their foster children know that they always have a home with them even when they are all grown up.

“We like all the children we have looked after to know this is always their home”.

By working for Leeds City Council, carers will help ensure all the available funding for fostering goes towards children and young people and that Leeds children are fostered in their home city, which at times can help them remain in their local school and community.

Would you like to know more?

Contact Leeds Fostering Department on:

Email: ss.fostering.and.adoption@leeds.gov.uk (please include your phone number)

Website: www.foster4leeds.co.uk