

Delegated Authority

For parents of children living in Foster Care

When children live with Foster Carers our priority is to make sure that they are safe and happy. *“You only get one childhood, it’s our role to make sure it’s the best one they can have” - North Lincs Foster carer*



The Government have supported this, and their research has found that some of the legal and decision-making processes got in the way of children making the most of their time living with Foster Families. By working together as team, we can make sure that your child is able to enjoy their day-to-day childhood and don't miss out on any of life's opportunities.

As the parent for the child your view is very important so this tool has been created to give us an insight into what you would like the care your child receives to look like.

Whilst living with a Foster Family it feels more normal for them to be able to discuss and agree day to day decisions with their Foster Carers. Often there are other children in the home and having to seek out additional permissions for certain things can make them feel different or miss out. Children want to be able to do what their friends do and experience typical childhood things and as a team we can make that happen.

When a child goes to stay with a Foster Family lots of information is shared to make sure the Foster Carers know how to meet your child's needs. It's understandable for you to be curious or nervous about who is looking after your child so we can share information with you such as what they like doing and how many people are in the home. Foster carers and parents usually meet at planning meetings, children in care reviews and at family time. Sometimes this isn't possible, but you can still ask questions which will reassure you.

Foster Families are all supported by a Fostering Social Worker to help them look after Foster children. The Fostering Social Worker also ensures that Foster Families are offering children to right care. Foster Families have been through a lengthy assessment process and are reviewed every 9 months. This ensures they are offering the best care to your child including helping them with school, friends and family time.



Foster carers do not have Parental Responsibility for a Foster Child. As the parent you still have Parental Responsibility. If your child is cared for under a legal order such as a Care Order you share Parental Responsibility with the Local Authority so social workers will work closely with you on making decisions for your child. By delegating authority for some decisions, you do not lose any of your Parental Responsibility but can make day to day life feel more normal and social for your child. This delegated authority tool should be completed at the planning meeting and reviewed at every child in care review.

If you have any concerns, please discuss these openly with the social worker so these can be resolved. If you would like independent support the Family Rights Group confidential telephone advice line is available on **0808 801 0366**.

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For Children living in Foster Care



When a child or young person cannot live with their birth family they may need to live with a Foster Family. Other children in Foster Families have told us that they want to be able to do things other children do and don't want to feel different. All children living in Foster Care should have the same opportunities and childhood experiences as other children. One way to help us do this is to complete this 'delegated authority tool'.

Children and Young people have an adult in their lives who has Parental Responsibility for them. This is usually a parent but sometimes it's another adult who has cared for them. This means that there are some things they must agree to before they can happen, for example going abroad. If you are in care under a Care Order your social worker can make these decisions too.

Foster Carers, Parents and Social Workers should discuss everything in this tool and decide who can make these decisions. Some of the things you may be able to decide for yourself and you should tell us the things you think you are old enough to decide so we can talk about it.



This tool will be looked at in every child in care review so as you grow older you may be able to make more decisions for yourself. Any adult making a decision for you will always discuss your view before making a final decision. This includes how you want your hair cut, what clubs you would like to go on and if you want to go on a school trip.

If you have any concerns about this tool please contact your Foster Carer, Social Worker or your IRO to discuss further.



Child's name: _____

Delegated Authority tool for children in Foster Care

The tool is separated in to three sections.

- 1> Day to day decisions which should be delegated to foster carers.
- 2> Routine decisions with a longer-term impact should be discussed and decisions made depending on the child's care plan
- 3> Significant events cannot be delegated and must be made by a person with Parental Responsibility

Day to Day decisions

These decisions can ensure that your child doesn't feel different to their friends or other children of similar age and don't miss out on any childhood opportunities.

Carers should be able to make these decisions for your child unless there is a specific reason why. As children grow older and more independent these are the decisions they will begin to make for themselves where possible.

Consent to routine immunisations

- Foster carer Parent Local Authority
Comments:

Dental routine treatment inc local anaesthetic

- Foster carer Parent Local Authority
Comments:

Optician appointments, purchasing glasses etc

- Foster carer Parent Local Authority
Comments:

Consent to examination /treatment by school Doctor

- Foster carer Parent Local Authority
Comments:

Administration of prescribed/over the counter medications

- Foster carer Parent Local Authority
Comments:

Permission for school to administer prescribed/over the counter medications

- Foster carer Parent Local Authority
Comments:

Referral/ consent for YP to access another service e.g CAMHS

- Foster carer Parent Local Authority
Comments:

Signed consent for school day trips or trips under 4 days (which do not impact on planned family time)

- Foster carer Parent Local Authority
Comments:

Using computers at school

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

School photos

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Attendance at Parent's evenings

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Attendance at unplanned meetings with school e.g following incidents

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Registering at school

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Completing Personal Health and social Education

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Overnights with friends e.g sleepovers

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Holidays in the British Isles (which will not impact on planned family time)

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Joining a sports or social club

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Sports or clubs which are more hazardous e.g horse riding or climbing

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Haircuts or colouring

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Use of a mobile phone

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Taking up part-time employment or voluntary work

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Accessing social media

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Taking photos or other media which may enter public domain (e.g in the paper with school or social clubs)

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Attendance at a place of worship

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Completing life journey work (this is where we explain why a child is in foster care)

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

New nicknames or use of a preferred name in line with the young person's wishes

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Please tell us preferences you have for your child:

This can include preferences for religion, traditions, nicknames, clubs etc. Foster families can try and accommodate these as much as possible if the child agrees.

Routine but longer-term decisions

These are daily decisions that may have a longer-term impact. Where the plan is for your child to remain with Foster Carer's longer term these decisions should be made with consideration to their daily lifestyle and delegated to them where possible. Likewise, where the plan is for the child to return to your care these decisions will consider supporting this.

This can be delegated to more than one person. An example being where your child is in long term care and has regular treatment linked to a health condition or disability the Foster Carer can be delegated authority to consent to this treatment following discussion with social workers. This can prevent the need for your child to have a social worker or manager attend the hospital with them.

Children should also be supported to attend school and social club activities however where this may impact upon family time discussions on reaching a solution will need to take place.

Children should also be supported to go on Foster family holidays. Where this is abroad the Foster carers should feel able to choose the location of the holiday however would always need consent from someone with Parental Responsibility to take them out of the country.

Signed consent to emergency medical treatment inc local anaesthesia

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Planned medical procedures

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Medical procedure carried out in the home where the person administering the procedure requires training (e.g child with disability/illness)

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Dental - signed consent to dental emergency treatment inc local anaesthetic

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Consent for school or social club trips which impact on Family time

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Signed consent for school or social club trips over 4 days

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Signed consent for school or social club trips abroad- Parental Consent is always required.

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Attendance at PEPS

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Changing a young person's school- Parental Consent is always required.

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Holidays outside the British Isles- Parental Consent is always required.

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Body Piercings (in line with UK legislation)

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Accessing and using Disability Living Allowance

Foster carer Parent Local Authority

Comments:

Please tell us preferences you have for your child:

This can include types of school you would like your child to attend, any medical procedures you may object to for religious purposes or countries you do not wish your child to go to.

Please comment on how you would like to communicate on these matters. This can include being happy to talk on the phone, in writing or to hold a meeting.

Significant events

There are situations where decisions cannot be delegated and must be made by a person with Parental Responsibility. This will be a discussion between yourself as the parent and the Social Worker.

It is important to note that in a genuine emergency a child should not be prevented from accessing essential treatment or pain relief on the basis that authority has not been delegated and the Foster Carer must do what is essential for the child’s welfare without delay.

These include:

People with Parental Responsibility must agree for a young person to applying for a passport. A child aged 16 or over who has the mental capacity to do so can apply for their own passport.

Where there is a Care Order, the child cannot be removed from the UK for more than a month without written consent of everyone with Parental Responsibility or the leave of the Court . Where the child is voluntarily accommodated the necessary consents must be obtained as for a child outside the care system.

A local authority cannot decide that a child should be known by a different surname or be brought up in a religion other than the one they would have been brought up in had they not become looked after. The child may reach an age where they make decisions about these matters themselves. You will be consulted as a person with Parental Responsibility.

Persons with Parental Responsibility must agree to a new or changes in faith, church or religious observance however a young person should be supported to make their own decisions if they have the capacity to do so.

Medical or Dental situations requiring **general anaesthetic** will require agreement from those with Parental Responsibility including the Local Authority Senior Management at a minimum of Service Manager level.

Date completed/...../.....

Signed

Parent/person with Parental Responsibility

Signature.....

Printed name

Social Worker

Signature.....

Printed name

Foster carer

Signature.....

Printed name