

Job description

Job title	Fosterline Adviser
Accountable to	Fosterline Coordinator
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide independent advice, information and support to current and prospective foster carers in England. Through doing so, to contribute to the effective delivery of The Fosterline Service, a free, national independent advice service, funded by the Department for Education, that offers support to both current and prospective foster carers.
Hours per week	<p>36 hours per week (9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday)</p> <p><i>Although this post is advertised as a full-time position, we are open to discussing flexible working arrangements including part-time hours or job-share posts.</i></p>
Location	Home-based
Status	<p>Permanent</p> <p>Note: Fosterline is funded by the Department for Education and has been in place since 2006. The Fostering Network has secured the contract to deliver Fosterline until 30 September 2025 (with the possibility of extension to 30 September 2026). We expect funding for Fosterline to continue beyond 2026 whether that is under the same or a new provider.</p>
<p>Disclosure required?</p> <p>(The post involves contact with children and/or access to confidential information about children and families)</p>	Yes

Responsibilities and accountabilities

- To provide impartial advice, information and support to enquirers to Fosterline England by telephone, email, or online, or via other channels as required, to a range of people including prospective foster carers, current foster carers and Special Guardians.
- To provide information and advice based on best practice, current regulations, standards and guidance in fostering, and to do so without judgement or opinion.
- To provide in-depth support to meet the needs of foster carers through focused one-to-one support
- To keep up to date with relevant legislation, policy and practice issues to ensure enquirers are receiving current advice and information.
- To be responsible for keeping accurate, appropriate and confidential records of all communications on our database, in line with organisational policies and procedures.
- To undertake training and attend meetings as required to further personal development and the development of The Fosterline Service.
- To produce information and advice content/materials/resources that meet the needs of prospective and current foster carers, and The Fosterline Service.
- To contribute to reviews and evaluations of The Fosterline Service as required (including data handling, providing written or verbal updates) to inform continuous improvement of the service.
- To adhere in full to all The Fostering Network and Fosterline England organisational policies including providing a timely response to risk and safeguarding issues.
- To contribute to other activities related to Fosterline and The Fostering Network as required.

Management

This role has no management responsibilities.

Budget

This role has no budget management responsibilities.

General statement

It is the nature of The Fostering Network that tasks and responsibilities are in many circumstances unpredictable and varied. All employees are therefore expected to work in a flexible way when the occasion arises and undertake tasks that are not specifically covered in their job description.

Person specification

Our values

As an organisation, we believe that we make a difference to foster care and our people values are expressed in the work that we do:

We are TRUSTED

We are TOGETHER

We are VITAL

Knowledge and experience

Essential

- Experience of providing advice, information and support by telephone.
- Knowledge and/or experience of working with foster carers or fostering services (within the field of foster care, social work, counselling or community work with carers, families and children).
- Demonstrable knowledge of legislation, guidance, standards, best practice and the legal framework surrounding fostering, kinship care and Special Guardianship.
- Knowledge and/or experience of the recruitment and assessment processes for foster carers and Special Guardians in England.
- Working knowledge and/or experience of the issues facing foster carers and children/young people with care experience.
- An understanding of safeguarding including child protection procedures.
- A working knowledge of Local Authority and Independent Fostering Services organisation and practice.

Desirable

- Experience of fostering.
- A qualification in social work, with experience of fostering.
- Knowledge and understanding of the welfare benefits and income tax systems.
- Knowledge/experience of the process for investigating allegations made against foster carers.

Skills and abilities

Essential

- Excellent listening, verbal and written communication skills across a variety of communication methods (in-person, on the telephone, via digital platforms online).
- The ability to work quickly and accurately on your own and as part of a team.
- Excellent attention to detail in both written and verbal communication.
- The ability to digest complex information and explain issues and concepts with clarity and accuracy, without using technical jargon.
- Good IT and administration skills including the ability to keep accurate records.
- A non-judgemental attitude of acceptance for others whose values and attitudes may be different from your own.

Desirable

- Experience of using Microsoft 365 including Outlook, Teams, Dynamics and SharePoint.
- Familiarity with social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Additional information

Pay and conditions of service

Band	The Fostering Network Band 4
Salary	£37,000 per annum (pro rata, as necessary).
Annual Leave	25 days plus 5 Fostering Network days (pro rata, as necessary).
Probationary period	6 calendar months.
Notice period	8 working weeks. One week during probationary period.
Hours of work	36 per week. (9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday) <i>Although this post is advertised as a full-time position, we are open to discussing flexible working arrangements including part-time hours or job-share posts.</i>
Pension	Optional. Money-purchase scheme and salary sacrifice option is available with AEGON: Employee contribution is 3% of gross annual salary. Employer contribution is 5% of gross salary.
Season Ticket Loan	An interest free season ticket loan is available to all staff immediately.
Trade Union	The Fostering Network recognises the trade union Unite and members of staff can join if they wish.