

Regulations, Standards and Legislation

Equality Act 2010 including [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) and the [9 Protected Characteristics](#)

Fostering Service National Minimum Standards (England) 2011

Standard 2 – Promoting a positive identity, potential and valuing diversity through individualised care

Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care:

Standard 1 – Understand the principles and values essential for fostering children and young people

Standard 2 – understand your role as a foster carer

Standard 4 – Know how to communicate effectively

Hampshire County Council is required to provide inclusive services that eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people to a diverse range of children and young people, alongside our recruitment of foster carers and adopters.

Our aim is to ensure that all foster carers are suitably trained in aspects of equality and diversity, which includes legislation and their responsibilities and additional support, is offered to anyone who finds it difficult to understand diverse or complex situations.

Children and Young People

Foster carers are expected to examine ways in which diversity can be valued and activities adapted to meet the individual needs of the child or young person including dietary, food preparation and menu choices.

All children are given the opportunity to be cared for and educated by delivering services, including assessments, in ways that recognise, support and build on their strengths to help them develop and achieve their full potential.

Every effort is made to ensure that services are welcoming to all children, young people and others, significant in their care and wellbeing. Resources used to develop work with children and young people are chosen for their suitability and gentle nature. All people involved are expected to identify local community resources that contribute to the needs of individual children and young people, these are highlighted and promoted and where they do not meet required needs, alternatives are sought and suitably identified regardless of geographical location.

We encourage and support children to develop respect for themselves and for others, as well as understanding their rights and being well-informed about ways of challenging discrimination.

Social workers and foster carers are expected to challenge attitudes, behaviour and language that are non-inclusive and discriminatory, in a positive way.

Beyond that we recognise that each child and young person has identity characteristics that must be approached with sensitivity and care. Some of these characteristics are protected by [Law](#). It is important that all involved are able to support the child or young person to access appropriate services and overcome the discrimination they may face:

Culture – (although not a protected characteristic we regard this as an essential start point). Created by many different factors, memories, common experience, background, language, racial

identity, class, religion and family attitudes; e.g. The life traumas for unaccompanied asylum seeking children are compounded by the alien environment that they now find themselves in.

Race and ethnicity – types of things present in their family home, type of foods or skin and hair care, hairdressers who specialise in braiding or cutting African Caribbean hair.

Religion and belief – foods to avoid at all times or specific days, times for prayer, celebration or sacred days, direction the prayer mat should face, are they allowed to have their hair cut, at what age do they cover their head, fasting.

Disability – this can be physical, educational, mental health or a long-term health condition. We need to be proactive in supporting their entitlement to access opportunities, including access to leisure activities, hobbies, education and jobs.

Age – the need to advocate for the child or young person, particularly in relation to ensuring that their voice is heard and are able to take a meaningful part in decisions made about them.

State of pregnancy or motherhood - if a young person becomes pregnant whilst in our care she will need the support that we would offer to our own child. In terms of health, emotions, and personal development.

Gender – Children are offered opportunities to try out new experiences, which are not restricted by traditional gender options, such as leisure activities, recreation, education, training and jobs.

Gender Identity - children and young people can present themselves as male or female (not necessarily their physical gender) or neither. It is important that we listen to what they say and we seek specialist support for ourselves and the child.

Sexual orientation – children know about their sexuality from an early age, most adults who are gay or lesbian have known since the age of 6. It is important that we find ways to support the child with their school, finding similar friends and integrating them with society, on their terms.

Hampshire County Council is committed to communication with different organisations depending on race, culture, ethnicity, religious, gender identity and sexual identity to meet their diverse needs.

Equality & Diversity in Recruitment and Advancement of Carers

We recognise that any form of discrimination is unacceptable towards any carer or potential foster carer either directly or indirectly on the grounds of:

- Age, whether they be younger or older people
- Gender Reassignment – no matter which stage of the transitioning process
- Being married, in a civil partnership or single
- Being pregnant or on maternity leave
- Disability, whether physical, learning difficulty, mental illness or long-term condition
- Race – including colour, nationality, ethnicity or national origin
- Religion, belief or lack thereof
- Gender – whether male, female, transgender, gender Fluid
- Sexual orientation – gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual, pansexual etc.

All decisions made are based on related standards and procedures. Foster carers should have the opportunity to discuss any of these issues in supervision with their Supporting Social Worker.