

A chance to make a difference

Kasper Fostering carers are as diverse and individual as the children they care for

Who is willing to work 24 hours a day every day of the year combining a professional role with home life? Who would want to make the time and effort to understand why a child might be behaving in a challenging way, and offer unconditional regard?

Stereotypes need to be dispelled

During the past 13 years of listening to people's views, we have learnt that people have preconceptions and stereotypes about who can be a foster carer.

"When we first thought about fostering in our twenties, we nearly didn't go ahead, as we wrongly thought that you had to be much older and have lots of previous experience working with children,"

says Emma, left.

At Kasper Fostering, our foster carers are as diverse and individual as the children for whom we provide care, possessing a vast range of skills and qualities.

Ask Kasper carers what they feel are the key qualities a potential carer should have and these would include being a great listener, having a good sense of humour, plenty of patience, a flexible and creative approach, being resilient and optimistic, and possessing

an ability to form relationships and to work as part of a team.

Having the insight and ability to recognise and respond sensitively to what a young person's behaviour is trying to communicate are amazing talents. Often we can be perceived as unapproachable by our children.

What is fundamental to the way we work is to ensure that the right foster family is matched to the child from the outset in order to reduce the damage likely to be caused by disruptions and instability.

A good match includes identifying the skills and capabilities of the carers along with finding the right location, and the right cultural, lifestyle, language and educational needs of the young person to be looked after.

"At the time, we thought we would never have a child to live with us as it seemed to take forever before we had our first young person. However, seven years on, we are still part of his adult life and have been privileged to know that we have been part of the positive changes in his life and future," say Aurelia and Barry, left.

Kasper carers are passionate, dedicated and ambitious, and they ensure



Achieving aspirations: fourteen-year-old foster child Wayne Ryan, the current UK Aprilia Superteens title holder, who is backed by the Racing Steps Foundation, a private, not-for-profit fund

that the highest standard of care is provided for our children so that aspirations can be achieved.

How do our children and young people who have had disruption, uncertainty and often complex emotional difficulties achieve a positive future?

Kasper has been described as a "shining beacon of organisation" by its Ofsted inspector, and was adjudged "outstanding" at its last inspection.

How has this been made possible? Zenna Atkins, the chairman of Ofsted, says: "I wholeheartedly congratulate Kasper Fostering on their success and hard work in delivering such high standards. Excellence does not happen by chance. These providers have a real drive to inspire, challenge, and support

children. But there is no reason why everyone can't be outstanding. I hope that they will be a source of inspiration to others."

Carers at Kasper are seen as colleagues who work alongside other professionals. The support for their personal and professional development ensures everyone has the skills needed to fulfil the vital role as a childcare expert.

We do not expect everyone to have all the skills required on day one. Our learning is ongoing, with our carers attending monthly training, which includes focusing on achieving the Children's Workforce Development Council and NVQ qualifications.

"The training we receive has allowed us to increase our understanding of



the impact experiences can have on a young person," explain Kasper carers, George and Angie, left.

"We are always supported 24 hours a day and are confident that we will be

listened to and respected, and that everyone knows us."

We have been privileged at Kasper Fostering to work with amazing people who have encouraged our children to feel safe, secure and confident to cope with their future.

You could be part of our team!

If you are interested in becoming a Kasper carer, come and see us at the Liberty Shopping Centre, Romford on 21 and 22 May, or alternatively please contact Kate Hamilton-Harris on 0845 603 6088.

