

Kasper Fostering Young Person's Guide

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These meetings are important because they are about you and your future, so it is important that you are there.

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A place for you to list all your important dates, find useful telephone numbers on where to get help with education and hobbies.

Introduction to Kasper

Welcome to Kasper. This little book is here to help you find out more about being looked after by Kasper carers. Just in case you need to know who we are, here are a few details about the staff. You may meet some or all of us during your stay with your Kasper carers.

Whitstable Office



Mac Ornsby started Kasper in 1997. You may meet him as he sometimes visits carers at home.



Lin Redman runs Kasper on a day-to-day basis and also visits carers a lot, so say 'hi' if you meet her.



Jayne Robinson

and



Jenny Turton

and



Jenny Greenwood are often out and about seeing carers. They help to find families for children who are unable to live with their own parents



Kate Hamilton is sometimes out and about seeing carers. She helps to find families who would like to become foster carers.



Anne Stokes is in charge of the office and makes sure everything is done on time.



Amy Ansell helps Anne with the running of the office and if you phone the office it may be Amy saying 'hello'.



Donna Keene helps Anne & Amy in the office.



Di Jeffers also helps Anne & Amy in the office.

Bromley Office



Diane Eveleigh is often out and about seeing carers, so you may well meet her.



Dean Rhodes also visits carers so you may meet him too.



Lynne McCarthy works in the Bromley Office, it might be her you speak with if you phone in!

Support Staff – Kasper has other people who work with us from time to time. Sometimes they take you out for the day, drive you to school, take you to meet your parent or just chat with you.

So what does Kasper do?

We want you to be well looked after during your stay with Kasper carers and ensure you are listened to if you are having problems. We know not all children like or want the same things, so we will have chosen a family, who we think you will feel most comfortable with.

Kasper staff will visit your carers from time to time to see if you are OK and sometimes give advice to carers about how to look after you.

We hope all children with Kasper feel happy with their foster carers. However, we know sometimes children may feel unhappy with their care. If this happens you can talk to your carer or your Social Worker or Kasper staff. If you are still unhappy with your care there are phone numbers in the 'How to Complain' part of Kasper Fax for you to phone.



Our Mission Statement

“The purpose of Kasper is to empower children and young people to develop their individual potential by providing constant and effective care”.

We believe

- * you have the right to achieve all you can**
- * you should be cared for by adults who are concerned, show respect and are experienced**
- * our staff and foster parents must understand the importance of your birth family and your race, culture and religion.**

We aim to provide you with the best possible foster home where you can feel safe and secure, learn about yourself and your life, and be helped to grow into positive adults.

You are at the heart of everything we do at Kasper. We will always try to make sure that your needs and wishes are carefully matched with foster carers. Our foster carers are all trained and experienced to provide you with a safe, caring, healthy home to live in. We work to very high standards set by the government.

We are a small fostering agency. We work hard to make sure you have the right schooling and your health is looked after. We can, if need be, get extra help from staff if you need therapy or counselling, or encouragement in a certain skill or activity.

If you want to know more about what we do at Kasper, please ask your foster carer or the Fostering Social Worker for your foster family or ring Lin Redman, the Manager, on 01227 275985



About Me

Lets start by finding out some things about you: -

My name is

A rectangular box with a dashed border, intended for writing a name.

My photo

A large rectangular box with a dashed border, intended for a photo.

About Me

My Birthday is on



The colour of my hair is



The colour of my eyes are



My height is



My Favourite Things

Write about the things you like.

My favourite things are:

Food & drink: _____

Film: _____

Song: _____

Pop group/star: _____

TV programme: _____

Book: _____

Toy: _____

Game: _____

Colour: _____

Place: _____

Person: _____

My Family

Mum's name

Mum's birthday

Dad's name

Dad's birthday

My brothers and sisters:

Name:

Birthday:

Name:

Birthday:

Name:

Birthday:

My Family

Write down here the names and birthdays of other people in your family.

Grandparents



Aunties and uncles



Cousins



Now you've written about your family, in the next section we'd like you to write about your friends.

My Friends

This is where you can write the names and addresses of your best friends.

Name
Address

Telephone
E-mail

Name
Address

Telephone
E-mail

Name
Address

Telephone
E-mail

My Friends

This is where you can write the names and addresses of your best friends.

Name
Address

Telephone
E-mail

Name
Address

Telephone
E-mail

Name
Address

Telephone
E-mail

Other Grown Ups

Write down the people you can talk to and who will help you while you are being 'looked after'.

Social Worker

Name

Address

Telephone

School

Teacher's name

Address

Telephone

Foster Carer or Sessional Worker

Name

Address

Telephone

Thank You

Thank you for answering all those questions. We hope you enjoyed writing about your favourite things.

Now it's time for us to tell you some more about living away from home. Read the next section of your Kasper Fax carefully. We will explain to you what it means to be in care or 'looked after' so that you will understand where you will be and who you can talk to.



Being Looked After

Being 'looked after' is when you can't live with your own family and Social Services have to take care of you.

A Social Worker will have found a place for you to live with a foster family.

The Social Worker will make sure that everything is alright in your new place and that you are as happy as possible there.

Now we shall tell you about foster families, like the one you will be staying with.



Foster Family

A foster family is a family that may have one or two parents and also have children of their own. There may also be another 'looked after' child there as well as you, but this isn't always so.

The foster family may eat the same kind of food as you and celebrate the same special days. These could be birthdays, Christmas, Eid or Diwali. But the special days you celebrate will depend upon the religion and background you come from. There are too many to mention in this fax, so we have only given you a few examples.

The foster carer will also do the things that most parents do like taking you to school, making sure you are healthy, support any hobbies you have and take you on outings to fun places.

Most of the time, the foster family will be specially chosen to look after you because they are similar to your own family. So, for example, if you come from a Bangladeshi Muslim family, then your Social Worker will have tried to find another Bangladeshi Muslim family to look after you. If this couldn't be done, the Social Worker will have found a family for you with a culture and religion as close as possible to yours.

What happens now that I am 'looked after'?

That's a very good question! We can understand that you may be worried and unsure about what will happen to you but there are lots of people who will be able to help you.

You will remember earlier that we told you about your Social Worker.

Now we are going to tell you exactly what your Social Worker should do.



Social Worker

Your Social Worker is someone whose job it is to make plans for you when you are looked after and write this in your care plan. He or she will do this with you, your carer and usually your family.

It is also important your Social Worker makes sure you are okay in your placement and your experience of being 'looked after' is a good one.

So, when you first become 'looked after' your Social Worker will fill in some forms about you and your carer. These forms will look at how often you will see family and friends, your health, your school, what time you go to bed, the things that you like, how much pocket money you will be getting and much more.

Social Worker

Your Social Worker should also:

- * Visit you in your placement at least once every six weeks.
- * Talk to you alone about where you are living, how you are feeling and how you are getting on at school.
- * Talk to you if you are unhappy about anything (you can also talk to anybody else you are comfortable with – it does not have to be your Social Worker).
- * Talk to you about your hobbies, what you like and are interested in and also the things that you are good at.
- * Make sure a child care review takes place (We will explain about this meeting on the next few pages).



Child Care Review

Now we're going to explain to you what a child care review is and what will happen there as you will have one every 6 months.

The child care review is a meeting where a small number of people talk about what is best for your future. Because the meeting is about you, it is very important that you tell your Social Worker about the things you might want to talk about.

The review meeting is held in the place that you feel most comfortable. So this might be the place you are living in, the Social Services office or the Kasper house. Your Social Worker and the people looking after you will be at the review. It is possible your parents and your teacher from school might be there as well.

Other people who may be at the review are the LAC Co-ordinator or your Social Worker's manager. These people will start and finish the review and will ask you and others in the meeting about how you are getting on.

Child Care Review

Nobody is going to make you go to the review if you don't want to and if you do go, it is up to you what you want to say.

Even if you don't want to talk at the review, you can write down how you feel about something or you can make a drawing about it or make a tape. You can also get help from people you are living with or your Social Worker who may find other ways of finding out your views.

If there is somebody you don't want to come to the review, it is important that you tell your Social Worker.

The first review meeting should happen within one month of you being 'looked after'.

If you are still living away from home, the next one will take place three months after that. Then there will be review meetings every six months until you are no longer living at the placement. Sometimes they may happen more often if this is necessary.

Questions

We know that everything we've told you so far has been a lot to read and to try to understand. You must have lots of questions you want to ask, like:

“Why do the review meetings need to happen?”

“Will I still be able to see my family?”

“Can I still go to the same school?”

“How long will I live away from home?”

Okay, let us see if we can answer some of these questions for you over the next few pages.



Why do review meetings need to happen?

One of the main reasons that child care review meetings happen is because Social Services (the people that your Social Worker works for) have to make sure that they are making plans for your future.

The plans include making sure that you are getting on well in your placement, making sure that you are healthy, that you are going to school and that you are able to keep in touch with your own religion, culture and language.

The review also looks at other important things like how often you will see your family.

How often can I see my family?

The number of times you will see your family and which members of your family you will see very much depends on what is best for you.

There are lots of things that your Social Worker and the other grown ups will have to think about at the child care review before deciding this. For example, they will need to think about whether it is safe for you to see your family.

If you feel worried about seeing anyone in your family alone, it is possible for your Social Worker or another grown up to be with you when you meet.

For some of you it will not be possible to see your family whilst you remain in care. Whatever is decided, it will be talked about with you and at your review and you will be asked about your feelings.

Will I still go to the same school?

Wherever possible, children who are being 'looked after' will be able to keep going to the same school.

The Social Worker will try very hard to keep you in your school because they know that it is already hard for you to get used to living away from home and it would be even harder if you had to change schools as well.

But sometimes children that are being 'looked after' are living too far away from the school they have been going to. If this happens, you might have to go to another school.



When can I go home?

You are probably wondering if the grown ups at the child care review will talk about you going back to live with your family.

The answer is yes; they will talk about this as part of your future care plan.

Some children who are 'looked after' go back to their own families after a short time living away but it isn't always possible for all children to go back.

If it isn't possible for you to go back to your family, then the child care review will talk about where you should live for a long time. The decision about this is sometimes made by a Court and a Judge. (if you want to know more about why you can't live at home, speak to your Social Worker about it).

This could be a foster family who can look after you for a long time or it could be in a family who want to adopt you.

Advocates

If you are unhappy with what is decided at your child care review or with anything else and don't want to talk to your Social Worker, foster carer or another adult known to you, then you can talk to an advocate.

An advocate is a grown up who you can talk to about why you are unhappy and who you are unhappy with.

They will let you say what you want to say and give you support if you need it. For example, if there is something you feel uncomfortable talking to your Social Worker about, your advocate can talk to the Social Worker for you.

The advocate can also attend review meetings and help you to make a complaint if you are very unhappy about social services.

What you say to an advocate does not have to be passed on to your Social Worker or Social Services unless you or others are in real danger.



Advocates

To get an advocate, you can talk to your Social Worker. Advocates make sure that children who are 'looked after' are getting everything they should have while they are living away from home and that they are being treated properly.

You can find their telephone number in the "useful information" section of your Kasper fax (Voice for the Child in Care).

What to do if I am really unhappy

There might be lots of reasons why you would feel unhappy about being 'looked after'. Sometimes you might be unhappy with your carers or the plans for your future.

You may speak to your carer, Social Worker or teacher about your worries or you can speak to the Complaints Officer at Kasper who will try to put things right. If you want to speak to the Complaints Officer just tick the box on the Help Card (enclosed) and put it in the envelope provided. Then just stick it in a post box and someone will contact you within a week. They will arrange to visit you and help you with the complaint.

If you want to speak to somebody who doesn't work for Social Services, you can speak to an "advocate".



Bullying

The carers and staff at Kasper want to make sure you know what to do if you are being bullied.

Here is a short story to read. Think about what you might do if you were David.

What can I do if I am bullied?

Claire and Laura follow David into his bedroom. Claire grabs David while Laura throws his favourite toy on the floor and stamps on it. “We’ll do this again tomorrow unless you give us some money,” says Claire, “and if you tell anyone we’ll come and get you.” David gets them some money, but every week Claire and Laura come back and do the same thing.

Write down what you think David should do.

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Answers on next page

Bullying – what David should do!

If you are bullied you must get help!

- The first thing to do is tell an adult who is looking after you what is happening
- Remember adults should make sure you are protected from harm
- If you feel shy about asking for help, use the help card at the back of the book. Write your name on it and give it to them, or leave it in a safe place where you know they will find it
- If you have a friend to support you, you could ask them to come with you to ask for help
- It is ALWAYS important to report bullying. It is not telling tales or grassing, it is keeping safe.

What if it is an adult who is bully me?

- You must tell another adult straight away. You could tell a carer, a teacher or a Social Worker.
- You could phone Social Services, Childline or the NSPCC (telephone numbers in the Useful Info Section).

Bullying

What can I do if I think someone else is being bullied?

Sarah's mum can't look after her and she has had to go into foster care. Sarah has to share a bedroom with Kelly, who is also staying with the family. Sarah is worried about her family. Sarah tries to make friends and join in with Kelly, but Kelly just ignores her and calls her names. Sarah feels hurt, lonely and goes to her room to cry.

David, who also lives with the family, can see what is happening. He feels sorry for Sarah and wonders what he can do.

Write down what you think David should do.

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Answers on next page

Bullying – What David should do!

Be a special friend!

- Try to be a friend to the person being bullied
- Don't rush over and take the bullies on: you might get hurt and you don't want other people thinking you're a bully
- Tell the person being bullied you know what is happening and that you will help them
- You could go with them to get help from an adult
- Remember if you ignore bullying, you are saying it is okay
- Don't let the bullies get away with thinking that no one will do anything

A copy of Kasper's Bullying Policy is in the back of this fax.

Ask for help

Remember, it is very important that you talk to an adult if you are worried about something because if an adult knows something is wrong they can help you, but they need to know, to be able to help!



Useful information

Here are some groups and organisations that you can talk to if you need help about any part of being in care. Most of these numbers are free to call but you have to pay to call some of them. You'll see we have told you which ones are free of charge.

CHILDLINE IN CARE (calls are free)

Helpline: 0800 884444
Mon-Fri 3.30pm – 9.30pm
Sat-Sun 2.00pm – 8.00pm
Website: www.childline.org.uk

CHILDLINE (calls are free)

Helpline: 0800 1111
Website: www.childline.org.uk

VOICE FOR THE CHILD IN CARE (calls are free)

Telephone: 0808 800 5792
Mon – Fri 9.00am – 5.00pm
Website: www.vcc-uk.org

The Children's Rights Director - Roger Morgan
The Office of the Children's Rights Director
St Nicholas Building
St Nicholas Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 1NB

Telephone: 0800 528 0731
Website: www.rights4me.org

Useful information

NSPCC (calls are free)

Helpline: 24 hrs 0800 800 5000

Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

CHILDREN'S LEGAL CENTRE

Telephone: 01206 872 466

Mon – Fri 10.00am – 12.30p & 2.00pm – 4.30pm

Website: www.childrenslegalcentre.com

INDEPENDENT VISITORS N.C.H

Telephone: 020 7704 7070

Mon – Fri 9.00am – 5.00pm

Website: www.nch.org.uk

THE WHO CARES? LINKLINE (calls are free)

Telephone: 0500 564570

Mon, Wed, Thurs only 3.30pm – 6.00pm

Website: www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk

**The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services
and Skills (OFSTED)**

Telephone: 08456 404040

Mon – Fri 9.00am – 5.00pm

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

KASPER

Telephone: 01227 275985

Mon – Fri 9.00am – 5.00pm

24hrs: 07956 870863

Website: www.kasperfostering.org

Dictionary

- ‘Social Services’** The people that your Social Worker works for.
- ‘Social Worker’** The person whose job it is to make plans for you when you are looked after.
- ‘Fostering Social Worker’** The person whose job it is to help your foster carer look after you.
- ‘Looked After’** When you can’t live in your own family and the Social Worker has to find a place for you to stay.
- ‘Care Plan’** The form your Social Worker will fill in about the plans for your future.
- ‘Foster Family’** A family specially chosen for you to live with when you are not living at home.

Dictionary

'School'	Where you go to learn and get an education.
'Placement'	Another name for the place in which you will be living.
'Child Care Review'	A meeting where a small number of people talk about what is best for your future.
'Complaints Officer'	A person you can speak to if you are unhappy about your plans or anything else.
'Advocate'	An independent person you can speak to if you don't want to speak with anyone from Social Services about why you are unhappy.
'Looked After Children (LAC) Coordinator'	The person who will chair your child care review.