

Fostering with Oxfordshire County Council

In line with a national trend, the number of children coming into the care system in Oxfordshire has increased in recent years. There are currently more than 600 looked after children in the county, most of whom will at some point require a foster placement. As a result, the needs of our fostering service are continuously changing and currently we are especially keen to hear from people who can consider Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) and teenagers.

UASC -

As I am sure you are aware, 2015 saw the shocking and saddening events of Europe's Refugee Crisis unfold in the British media. The influx of refugees and migrants to Europe from Syria reached staggering new levels, dominating headlines and prompting stormy political debate.

Although to date we have not seen a direct increase in the number of Syrian children seeking asylum in Oxfordshire, we have seen the number of asylum seekers arriving from other countries rise.

As a result, we are urgently trying to find more fostering families who are able to make them feel as at home as possible and who can ensure they keep good links with their heritage. This is so important because they've already had to leave a family, a home and a country.

Teenagers -

We have a great need to find people who are interested in caring for teenagers. Fostering teenagers can be a challenge but there's nothing more rewarding than using your skills to help a young person turn their life around.

To foster teenagers you may not need to be at home all the time, so you can work and foster. What is important is that you do have the time to spend with the young person on a one to one basis to give support and be there when necessary.

If you think you have the time and skills to help support our young people, please get in touch by calling the number below.

Additionally, there are many other fostering opportunities available with Oxfordshire County Council, such as:

- **Sibling groups** - who need to be placed together rather than on their own
- **Babies and toddlers** - who need to be placed with foster carers who are at home full time
- **Disabled children** - who need people with the skills and experience to care for them
- **Children with specialist fostering needs** - who are among our most vulnerable children and young people and are part of specialist fostering schemes.

What help will I get? Specialist training and support is given, carers receive an allowance and for some types of fostering additional fees.

Interested? Give us a call on **0800 783 5724** or visit: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/fostering