



# Pathway Carers

**As a Pathway Carer, you will be supporting young people in care on their transition from residential care to prepare for independent living.**

Our Pathway Carers, along with our Dedicated Placement Support Team will enable a young person to move from a residential setting and learn to adjust and find their place in the community.

The young people on this scheme may have experienced several placement breakdowns and will be in need of support to help them achieve their potential. You can be their role model, their guiding light at a critical time in their lives.

As a Pathway Carer, empathy is important and you should have the desire to empower young people. Many of the young people who need Pathway Carers have previously struggled in education and may need your guidance and support to consider their next steps in life.

You may support them to build relationships with their family and friends to enable them to develop an effective support network for their future. Therefore, your skills of working with young people and understanding the issues that they may face will be important. You will also support our young people to access services such as CAMHS (Children & Adolescent Mental Health Services), health appointments and educational support.

Some Pathway Carers look after more than one young person at a time, with guidance from our team. This would mean receiving further payment enhancements.

### **What we need from you:**

- A spare bedroom available for the sole use of fostering.
- No children under the age of 10 years old living in the home (This will be considered on a case by case basis).
- Have relevant skills, qualifications and/or life experience to provide dedicated support which will be tailored to the needs of the young person.
- Able to drive and have access to a car.

### **In return our Pathway Carers receive:**

- Generous payments and allowances reflective of your skills, expertise and time.
- Excellent ongoing bespoke specialist training and support.
- Ongoing support from our Dedicated Placement Support Team.
- Access to help and guidance 24/7.
- The opportunity to be part of a dynamic and creative team who work together to achieve the best outcomes for young people.

If you have experience of working with and / or caring for young people at a critical time in their lives, then we would love to hear from you. Get in touch with the Recruitment Team and we'll answer any questions you may have.

**YOU could be the difference. Together, we can build positive futures.**

## Case study

### Leanne - Pathway Carer

After working in Further Education for over 15 years, I succeeded in becoming a Senior Leader at an inner city school where there were really high rates of deprivation. This is where my understanding of and enjoyment of working with and supporting young people grew. In particular, I developed the ability to relate effectively with young people from a wide range of ethnic and social backgrounds.

I stepped away from the educational sector after reaching the position of Principal as I wanted a new life challenge. I wanted to continue to use my knowledge, skills, expertise and work from home. I wanted to make a difference to a young person's life, along with the option to earn a professional salary; we all need to earn a living, right! After much research and many meetings with the Specialist Team Manager, I became one of the first carers on the Specialist Pathway Team and it was the best career move I ever made! I'm treated like a professional because let's face it, I am a professional, but I now gain the best bonus ever... a family!

The most rewarding aspect of being a Pathway Carer is working with young people, changing their life chances and making a positive impact on their social mobility. Being the 'secure base' of a young person's life encourages them to aspire and believe they can achieve a positive, rewarding future; despite the turbulent backgrounds they may have come from. I've encountered many children and know how positive role models and the understanding that 'someone believes in you' can make a huge impact on how a young person can start to perceive themselves. Perceive their future.

If you have skills and expertise with working with vulnerable children and can offer an environment to help calm and develop a young mind, this could be your next career move. I would urge you to get in touch with the Recruitment Team, they'll help you to decide if this is the right role for you.

“ Positive role models and the understanding that **‘someone believes in you’** can make a huge impact on how a young person can start to perceive themselves. ”



# Payments, allowances and further professional development

## **We know that the best carers are not motivated to look after children and young people because of the money they can earn.**

However, we also know that we need the best people, with the skills, qualifications, experience and dedication to provide some of our children and young people in care, with the best opportunities in life.

Therefore, we are offering professional fees for professional carers. We believe that our children and young people deserve the best care, which is why we are looking for Specialist Carers to join our team. Here is some further information about the specific roles, the payments you will receive and other information for you to consider:

### **Pathway Carers**

Our Pathway Carers welcome a young person between 10 – 18 years into their family home forming a trusting and valuable relationship even if only for a short time. If appropriate, Pathway Carers can look after two young people, in their home, at the same time.

Pathway Carers will have good communication skills and an ability to work with a range of professionals and organisations.

Pathway Carers will be able to create a stable, safe and supportive environment for a young person. Providing the aspiration and encouragement to fulfil their full potential. Setting ground rules, creating behavioural boundaries and enforcing them, building positive behaviours.

# Training and Support

**We believe that professional training and support is personal - personal to you, your current skills and experience (along with meeting the needs of your role at that time). We will encourage and support you to develop and enhance your skills throughout your career with us.**



“ The training was so helpful. No classrooms or essays, it just helped me to make sense of and really understand what would be involved in my role. ”

Leicestershire County Council Specialist Carer

## Leicestershire County Council will support you as a foster carer across the following areas:

- Practical and emotional support from your own supervising social worker with regular fortnightly face to face visits and telephone support through the foster carer support line.
- If visits or support are needed in between regular visits, this will be offered by the supervising social worker who is there to support you every step of the way.
- Working with multiple agencies and partners (such as Educational Psychologists, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and the Early Help Services) through the delivery of care planning.
- Our Virtual School will provide our foster carers with tips and strategies to help children in their care to get the most out of school and further education.
- Specialised training tailored to support you in meeting the child or young person's needs.

Practical and emotional support to enhance your role and encourage further development.

The 'Virtual School' is a Leicestershire County Council service whose role is to improve the education of Leicestershire's children in care by supporting schools, foster carers and social workers to help children and young people to do their best.



As members of The Fostering Network we are part of an organisation that strives to improve policy and legislation for foster carers and children in care. Our membership provides our foster carers with access to lots of benefits, information and support too.



We are also members of NATP (National Association of Therapeutic Parenting).

# The application process

To become approved as a Specialist Carer you will need to be assessed as a foster carer. This process takes between 4-6 months and you can remain in your current employment if necessary, during that time. We will be flexible and supportive to enable you to make plans, learn more and make a considered transition to fostering.

Throughout the assessment process, you will be invited to training, which will further enhance and support your skills and provide an opportunity to meet other carers. Some Specialist Carers remain in their employment throughout the assessment process, but will then leave and fully dedicate themselves to the role.

Stage one of the process is where the checks and references are gathered. Stage two of the process is where you will be allocated your own social worker who will visit you at home to understand you, your skills and how best you may be suited to the role. We run these stages together and during this time, you will attend training to prepare you for the role and continue to receive bespoke training and ongoing development after approval as a Pathway Carer.

## Panel

At the end of this process, you will attend our Panel where a recommendation will be made to approve you as a Specialist Carer with Leicestershire County Council.



# What next?

**You may currently be in employment and considering a change. You may be looking for a new opportunity, one where you can use your skills to make a real difference. Whatever stage you are at in thinking about the Specialist Carer roles with Leicestershire County Council, then the Recruitment Team are here to help.**

**Call 0116 305 05 05 or email [fostering@leics.gov.uk](mailto:fostering@leics.gov.uk)**

We can answer your questions, provide further information and arrange for you to talk to one of our carers so you can find out what it's really like.

We can arrange to visit you at home to discuss the roles in more detail.

There is no pressure to progress, just a willingness to help you to decide if this is the next step for you.

**So, call us, email us, get in touch, we would love to hear from you.**

“ From where Jason was when he first came to us, to where he is now, it's almost unbelievable. It was simply down to dedication, the support we got from the team and never giving up on him. ”

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