



# A YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO OAKWOOD FOSTERING






# Hello and Welcome!

It's great to have you with us. This guide will help you understand more about what foster care is and what to expect while you are living with an Oakwood foster family.

You're not alone there are many children and young people who are cared for by foster parents. Everyone's journey is different, and we are here to support yours.



# Who's Who?

There are several people who are here to support you and listen to you. These people work as part of Children's Services. That means they are all working together to make sure you're safe, well looked-after and happy.

## Your social worker is

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Your foster parent's supervising social worker is

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Other important contacts

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

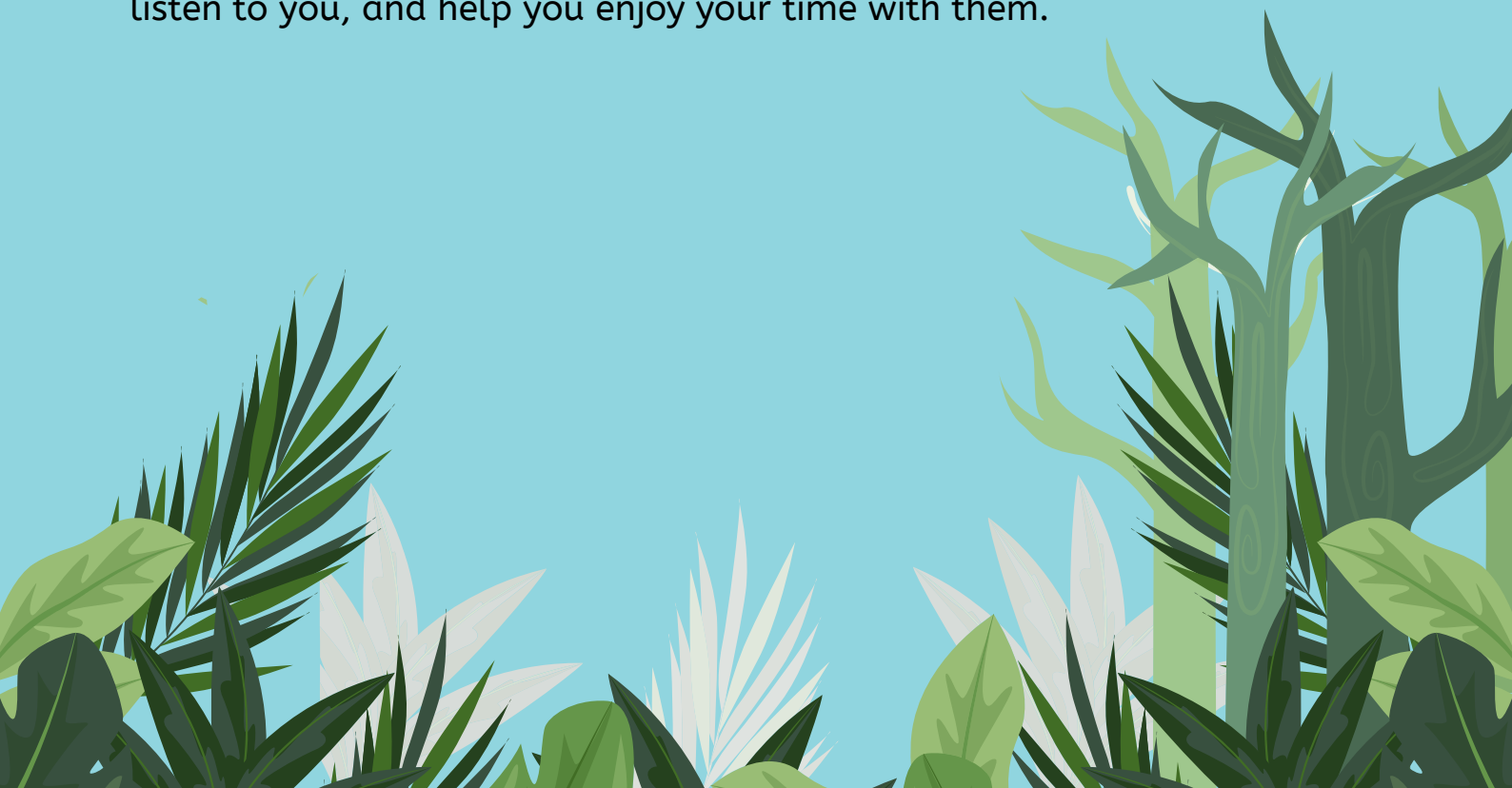


# Who Will Be Looking After Me?

You'll be living with foster parents. These are specially trained adults who care for children who can't live with their families for a time. They might be a single person or a couple. There may be other children in the home too.

Your foster parents have been carefully chosen and approved to make sure they are kind, safe, and ready to support you. They are supported by a supervising social worker who will visit you regularly.

Your foster parents will help you feel safe, support your learning, listen to you, and help you enjoy your time with them.



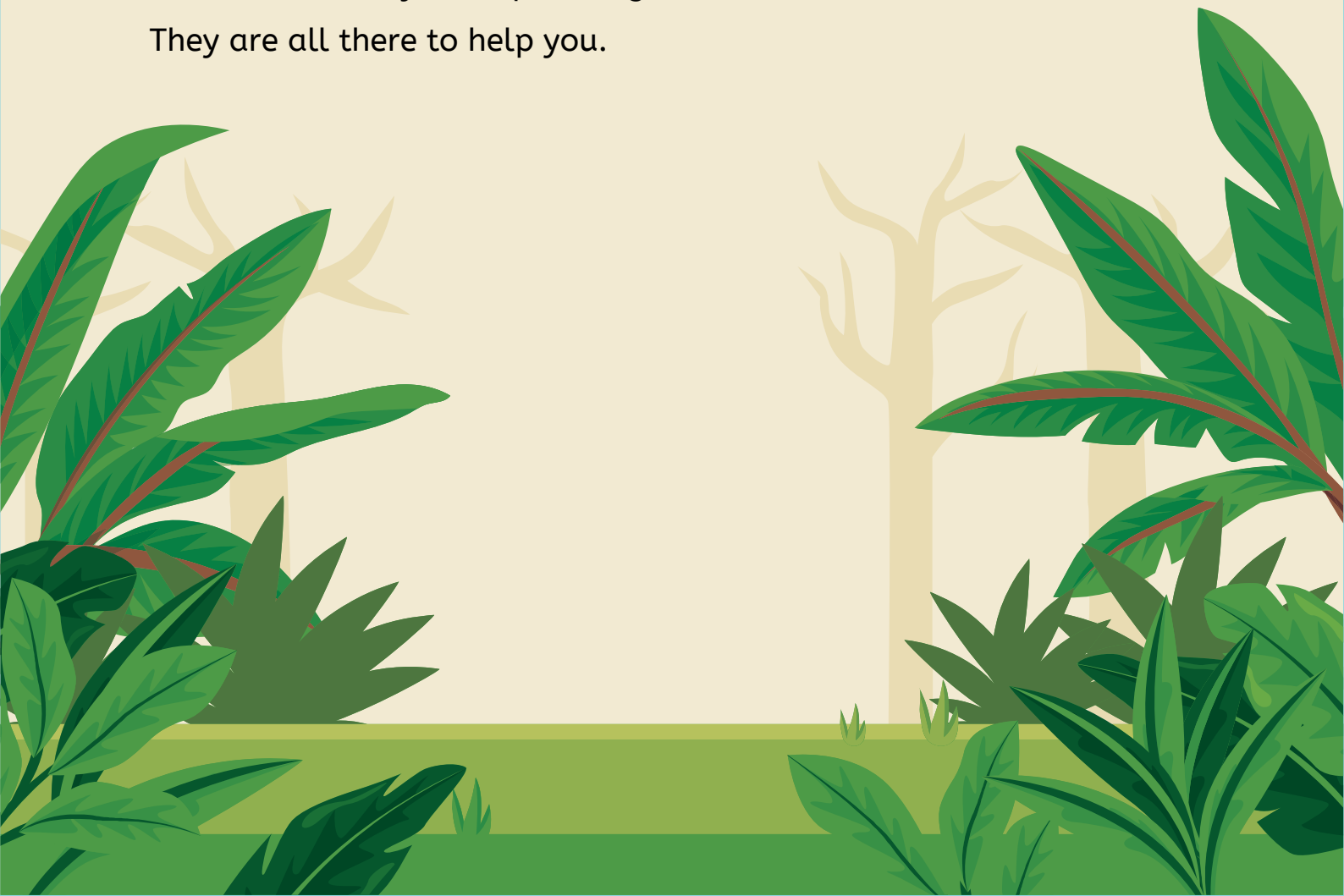
# Living Together

Every home is different. Your foster parents might have different routines or house rules to what you're used to and that's okay. They will make sure you feel welcome and part of their family.

Living together at first may feel a little bit strange to you to live with a different family. Your foster parents know this and will do everything possible to help you to settle in. Please feel free to let them know what your likes and dislikes are. For example, there might be certain foods that you like or don't like, or you might not like the bedroom light switched off. Please just tell them.

If anything worries you, you can talk to your foster parent, your social worker or your supervising social worker.

They are all there to help you.



# your care plan

Your social worker will talk to you about why you're in foster care and how long you might stay. This is all written in a document called a care plan.

There are regular meetings to check how things are going. These are called review meetings. You'll have your say and be supported by someone called an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) who is there to make sure all of your needs are met and that everyone is working to your care plan.



**Your IRO is:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Email:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

# The GROW Model at Oakwood

At Oakwood Fostering we use our very own GROW Model to guide how we care for children and young people. GROW stands for:

## **G** Grounded in Safety

We help you feel physically and emotionally safe. That means having safe foster homes, clear routines, and foster parents who understand how to respond calmly and kindly, especially when you're having a tough day.

## **R** Relationships that Repair

We believe that feeling close to and cared for by someone helps young people feel better. Your foster parents will build a strong, trusting relationship with you over time. You won't be expected to 'be perfect' you will just be expected to be you.

## **O** Opportunities to Thrive

We want you to have the chance to enjoy life, learn, and be proud of yourself. Whether it's school, hobbies, or interests, we'll help you try new things and grow your confidence.

## **W** Withstanding Life's Challenges

Everyone has hard days, and that's okay. At Oakwood, you'll be supported through your ups and downs. We help foster parents understand trauma and provide support so you can get back on your feet, even after difficult moments.

We want every young person to leave Oakwood feeling stronger, more hopeful, and more connected to who they are and who they want to become.

## Pocket Money

You'll get weekly pocket money. The amount depends on your age. You can talk to your foster parent if you need help to manage your money.



## School or College

You will keep going to school or college while in foster care. If you need help, your foster parent will support you. They'll also help with homework and school events.

If school is difficult for any reason, talk to your foster parent or social worker so they can help you sort it out.

## Your Memories and Life Story

It's important to keep memories of your life. You might have a memory box, life story book or use the Storyteller app where you can collect photos, tickets, school reports or anything special to you.

Everyone's story is unique, and these memories are part of what makes you, you.

## Seeing Family and Friends

Staying in touch with people who are important to you matters. Your social worker will talk with you about seeing family or friends. Sometimes this happens face-to-face, sometimes over the phone or online.

If you're unsure or worried about this, speak to your social worker.

## Looking After Yourself

Your foster parents will help you learn skills to take care of yourself. They'll register you with a GP and dentist, make sure you go to appointments and help you stay healthy.

They can also help you learn how to cook, clean, budget, and take care of your own wellbeing.

## Your Interests

Your foster parents want to know what you enjoy doing whether that's sports, music, art, gaming or something else. They'll support you to try activities and explore new hobbies.

Let your foster parents or social worker know what you enjoy. They can help you find clubs or events you'll like.

# If something's wrong... SPEAK UP

You have the right to be listened to. If something is bothering you, talk to your foster parent or social worker. If you're still not happy, you can make a complaint.

You can do this by contacting Oakwood using the details at the end of this booklet.

What do you do if you need to complain? If you are not happy about the way you are being looked after, or feel you are not getting the help you need, you have the right to complain.

You can ask your foster parent or social worker to sort things out, or you can ask the supervising social worker who visits your foster parent to help you.

All complaints are taken seriously and are treated in confidence.

If you're not happy with the way that Oakwood Fostering is working with you, you can tell Ofsted. [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

You can also talk to someone outside the fostering agency, like Childline or an advocate.



# WELCOME to oakwood – We are REALLY GLAD you are here!

At Oakwood, we're here to make sure you feel safe, supported and heard. We want you to enjoy your time with your foster parents, discover what makes you feel special and confident about your future.

## Useful Contacts

- Childline – 0800 1111 – [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- NSPCC – 0808 800 5000 – [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- Coram Voice – 0808 800 5792 – [www.coramvoice.org.uk](http://www.coramvoice.org.uk)
- Children's Commissioner – Help at Hand – 0800 528 0731 – [www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)

## Oakwood Fostering contact details

[info@oakwoodfostering.com](mailto:info@oakwoodfostering.com) | [www.oakwoodfostering.com](http://www.oakwoodfostering.com)

