

DEVON FOSTER CARERS' ASSOCIATION



The National Minimum Standards, which we are all required to work within, form the basis of the regulatory framework under the Care Standards Act 2000 (CSA) for the conduct of fostering services and Standard 28.2 requires that

“Payments of allowances and any fees paid are made promptly at the agreed time and foster carers are provided with a statement of payment at the end of each tax year”.

We're aware that these statements have not available for some time and we're working hard to ensure they become reinstated in Devon in the future. In the absence of these, in the meantime, Carers can receive a print-out of all payments made to them by Devon County Council each year. If you need one, for your tax returns, or would like one for your own records, simply contact the Finance team direct (Paul Fitchett at paul.fitchett@devon.gov.uk OR Helen Weeks at helen.weeks@devon.gov.uk and ask for one.

In the meantime, any Carers who would like to see the swift return of the annual financial statements, may like to write on their own behalf to Sonia Sandiford, The Interim Operations Manager, at Room 269, County Hall, Exeter EX2 4QD to express their wish that the statements be provided to carers in accordance with the National Minimum Standards. The Minutes of the 28th April provide further information.



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DON'T FORGET!!!

General guidance on fostering and tax can be found on HMRC website, <https://www.gov.uk/foster-carers/help-with-the-cost-of-fostering> , but carers are **STRONGLY** advised to check their own individual personal circumstances carefully.

To ensure they receive the benefit of Class 2 National Insurance credits when they retire, Carers will need to have at hand a copy of a letter from Childrens' Services confirming how long they've been caring for Devon. **Don't miss out** – ask your supervising social worker for one now.

Usual Copy **CONSTITUTION** (outlining our Aims and Objectives) **attached**, together with **MINUTES (and Summary)** of our last meeting on 28th April 2017

REMEMBER: All foster carers registered with Devon are automatic members of **The Fostering Network**. Their helpline is a major benefit and carers can contact them direct, assured of complete discretion about anything to do with their fostering role (or about fostering issues generally). **Any Carers who are unsure about whether they have been enrolled as members, or have not been receiving the Foster Care magazine, should contact either The Fostering Network direct, or their Supervising Social worker, to check it out. Don't miss out!!**

Bristol University has undertaken research into Compassion Fatigue in foster carers. The research summary and final report makes interesting reading and can be found at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/ps/research/projects/completed/2016/compassion-fatigue-in-foster-carers/>

Fostering Fortnight is fast approaching (**8th – 29th May**) - if anyone would like us to organise a particular event to mark the date, please do contact one of us 😊



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CONSULTATIONS

YOUR VIEWS AND COMMENTS ARE IMPORTANT!!

National Fostering Stocktake – Call for Evidence.

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-fostering-stocktake-call-for-evidence>)

Carers are invited to submit their own views on this important stocktake at the website above. The deadline for responses is the 16th June and responses will be taken into consideration in the panel's recommendations to Government. This will directly impact on how the Government reacts to fostering nationally in future. As we all recognise, this is a very important time for fostering in this country and, as opportunities for individual carers to be involved in the changing future of fostering are few and far between, this is a golden opportunity to have your views heard.

DON'T MISS IT!

Your views on the Fostering Service – Consultation email newsletter of 7th April – will matter! This consultation relates to proposed changes to the Complaints Policy, Criteria for Level 3 carers and to Devon's Charter. The deadline closes 5th May! Feedback should be sent to fosteringoperationsmanager-mailbox@devon.gov.uk



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DON'T FORGET

our next meeting on

2017 at 10.30 a.m.

Oaklands Court, Tiverton.

Hope to see you there!

How to contact us; -

- **via** Facebook. Simply 'friend request' one of us, (Patricia Bagshaw, Leigh Strange, Nicky Knight or Mandy Heggadon) on Facebook and, once we've checked you are who you say you are, we'll add you to the closed group. After that, simply look for Devon Foster Carer's Association and you should be able to find us,

OR;

- **via** any one of our committee (so far!) Trish Bagshaw (**North**), Lewis Crowden (**Exeter**), Leigh Strange (**North**), Mandy Heggadon (**Exeter & East**), Sarah Turner (**Exeter & East**), Nicky Knight, David Leyland (**South**) or Rosemary Miles. We have carers from all walks, with all kinds of reasons for fostering and with all kinds of experiences. Feel free to contact any of us for any information about the Association and what we're doing on **YOUR** behalf.

If anyone would like to join us or help in any way, please do just let us know – the more the merrier.



REMEMBER, THIS IS **YOUR** ASSOCIATION

