

## **Online Training**

As previously announced, the fostering service is really excited to soon be offering online training courses to our foster carers. We are waiting for the results of our training survey before deciding which course to run first, but in the meantime here is some information for you about how online training will work for our foster carers:

### **How will I access online training?**

At the moment our plan is that our online courses will be advertised much like our face-to-face courses. We will contact you via the newsletter or via email with details of an online training course that is available. You will then apply if interested and (if successful) you will then receive a confirmation email to let you know you can now access the course if you log in to your account.

When we advertise the online courses to you we will also let you know how long you have to complete the course (we will put a time limit on the course completion to stop our credits being wasted if people do not complete the course).

Online training is still very new for us, so it might be the way that we use the resource changes over time according to feedback from carers and staff.

### **What is it like doing an online training course?**

As well as pages of information for carers to read and think about, the training materials contain a number of interactive exercises to help with learning.

Activities are small exercises that test understanding as carers progress through the course. They encourage carers to stop and think about the subject being discussed, and may require them to compare elements of theory with their own experiences.

Some activities are more hands-on. They may require carers to observe or try out activities in the workplace, draw a picture or talk to family, friends or colleagues.

At the end of the course carers complete a multiple-choice quiz to check that they have understood what they have been learning. This is only accessible once the course materials have been reviewed.

Carers should not worry if they do not pass the quiz first time. Guidance is provided to help carers answer any questions that were incorrectly answered, and the process of reviewing their answers and revisiting the course material is an important part of their learning.

If they answer any questions incorrectly on the third attempt they will still complete the course, but an indication of their final result will be given on their Certificate and on the training system.

When carers have successfully finished the quiz, or after their third unsuccessful attempt, a link will appear on their home page and on the View User Account page to provide access to their Completion Certificate and Development Log.

A free Workbook is provided with each course to allow carers to make notes as they work through the course material. These do not form part of the assessment in the course, but will assist learning and can be added to a carer's portfolio of evidence for their workbook too.

**How will the fostering service choose which online courses to offer?**

Initially we are hoping to choose our first courses based on the results of the carer questionnaire that was sent out about training priorities. Apart from carer feedback, we will also look at issues such as staff feedback about carers' learning needs, any issues identified at strategy group and any national issues in relation to learning for foster carers.

**Will the £50 charge for non-completion apply in the same way it does for face-to-face courses?**

Once you have applied for and been enrolled on a course you will continue to receive regular automated updates that it has not been completed. If you have not completed it in the timescale that we have given you when you applied (eg. three months) then a £50 charge will be applied. This reflects our existing policy of charging £50 to carers that do not attend face-to-face training and do not let us know beforehand.

Just as with our face-to-face training we will always take extenuating circumstances into account in relation to this. If you are not sure if you can complete a course within the specified time after applying, the best thing to do is not to log in and start it. If you haven't clicked on to the course we can still use the credit for someone else. Once you have begun it then the credit is lost to us if you have not completed it.

**Who will I contact if I am having technical problems with the website?**

The company that we are working with (AC Education) have a helpline for any technical issues, they will be able to help (01923 850408). We will put full details on our website. We've also attached a user guide to this email with some more information for you. You can also always contact the training team in the usual way with any queries.

**Will online training also be part of the 2018-19 programme?**

We very much hope that it will be, at the moment we have purchased a relatively small number of 'credits' to see how it goes. If it is successful then we hope to build on this for the training programme in 2018-19.