

Lifestyle and Support Offer

We appreciate the ongoing hard work and dedication of our carers as they help children and young people to achieve the very best outcomes.

As a foster carer at Sefton you will never go it alone and we are committed to making sure our carers always feel supported.

To show how much we value our carers and that we are here to support, we have teamed up with services across the Council and our partners in Sefton to introduce some great opportunities for the whole family to enjoy.

We believe our amazing support and lifestyle offer will help you to create an environment for our young people to flourish and reach their full potential.

Lifestyle Benefits and Opportunities

✓ Free Leisure Pass

Foster carers and all family members living in the household receive free Activate Fitness Membership. This membership for the whole family, gives access to the use of six facilities within Sefton with over 200 classes a week, 3 pools, a 400m running track, a cycling track and a lake.

✓ Free Parking

We want to make it as easy as possible for our carers to be able to get out and about across Sefton, whether it is care related, for shopping or leisure. We will provide you with a parking pass which allows you to access to 18 car parks across Sefton completely free of charge.



✓ Free Golf Membership

All foster carers and anybody living within the fostering household can take advantage of a free membership to Bootle or Southport Golf Courses. Both courses have 18 holes, are fun and challenging, making this a great day out for the whole family.

✓ Libraries

Sefton's Library Service's carers offer includes a Sefton's Carer's ticket which covers every member of the household and has added benefits such as a longer loan period of up to 56 days instead of 21 and no fines charged for late returns.

✓ Green Sefton Summer and Autumn Programme

Green Sefton brings together teams within the Council from Coast & Countryside, Parks & Greenspaces and more. With this offer, foster carers and their families can enjoy ranger led walks or activities along Sefton's glorious coast and greenspaces.

"We are so passionate about equipping our carers with as much knowledge and background, so they feel confident and supported by us."

"Working with families who centre their lives around providing love and safety to children who need it is inspirational and I am honoured to be a part of their journey."

Angela Siteo

Training and Development Officer



✓ Refer a Friend

Our foster carers are great advocates for Sefton, and we appreciate how they encourage people to foster with us, whether it be friends or relatives. To show how valuable this is to us, we give £500 to anyone who refers someone who then goes on to be approved as a carer.

✓ Max Cards

Sefton's fostering families will receive a Max Card. Families can use their Max Card at venues across the UK to get free or discounted admission. Create those special memories at a fraction of the price with offers on days out at castles, zoos, bowling alleys, trampoline parks and much more.

✓ Sefton's Events

Sefton hosts so many amazing events all year round. The Fostering Team work closely with event organisers to gain discounts and free tickets to attractions for our fostering families. These include, Dunes Splash World, Pleasure Land Southport, The Atkinson Theatre, British Musical Fireworks Championships, The Southport Air Show and much more.

✓ £25 Contribution fee

We love to shout out about how our carers are changing lives and it's so important that we listen to their first-hand experiences. We therefore, invite our carers to take part in events and information sessions to speak to potential or new carers. Our carers also love to fly the fostering flag by taking part in campaigns. All carers receive £25 each time they make a contribution.

Support for Carers



Foster Carers Training Programme

We are dedicated to the personal development of our carers, and we understand that good quality training is crucial in supporting them in their role. We are proud to offer a comprehensive training package, which will enhance their skills and knowledge needed for them to support children and young people.

Courses are delivered by our passionate and experienced training professionals whose role it is to bring people together to share experiences and learn from other foster carers, from our team of professionals, and from each other.

Before being approved, carers complete our three-day preparation course which gives a real understanding of fostering for Sefton.

Once approved, we will offer our Fostering Skills Scheme which will give a deeper understanding of the children's needs and help them to develop an even better understanding of the role.

Website and Social Media

At Sefton Fostering we regularly use social media for many different reasons whether it's to shout out and let people know about the amazing things our foster carers are doing, to update carers about events that are happening and can get involved in, or for carers to share their own posts and pictures. If you haven't already, please follow Sefton Fostering on Facebook or Twitter.

Foster Carers' Support Group in the North of the Borough

Sefton's Foster Carers support group not only gives the chance for carers to meet and chat to other carers but it provides a safe space for them to share experiences. This group is run by foster carers, for foster carers.

Foster Carers' Support Group in the South of the Borough

This is a very friendly, relaxed support group run by foster carers for foster carers. The aim is to provide a safe space to come together, offer support, advice, share experiences and be a listening ear to each other.

Fostering Service Virtual Support Group

This is run on a monthly basis by the fostering service. It provides information on the service, it allows carers to hear from guest speakers and enables carers to ask questions.

Our Network of Foster Carers

When you join us, you become part of one big fostering family where you will be supported by the team and also by our

amazing network of Foster Carers. Our carers are always there for each other at the end of the phone or in person. To help you stay in communication you will be able to join the foster carers' social media groups including Facebook and WhatsApp and there are also coffee mornings and social events.

Foster Talk

As a Foster Carer for Sefton Council, you will receive membership to Foster Talk. As a member you will receive the support and training in your role, from pre-approval stages through to retirement. Membership packages also include helplines to give advice and guidance, savings on family days out or holidays and more.

Foster Carers' Newsletter

The newsletter is a great way to get important information to carers, give the platform to tell positive stories and let people know about activities and support available. Our carers also have lots of input sharing their experiences and telling us what's going on in their lives.



Digital Champions

Our 'Digital Champions' are foster carers who offer some of their time to help carers with any issues they have with technology such as computers or phones. They are happy to be contacted and also have a regular section within the Foster Carers' Newsletter, where they give helpful hints and tips.

Celebrations

We are always finding ways to say thank you to our foster carers and their families at special times throughout the year. This includes events such as Teddy Bears Picnics in the Spring/Summer, raffles, group trips to the cinema and Christmas parties.

During October we say thank you to our foster carers' birth sons and daughters for everything they do. Children are treated to days out doing fun activities and they all receive a special certificate of thanks.

Fostering Duty

The Fostering Service provides a duty service during office hours. A member of staff will be available to respond to any immediate support issues you may have in the absence of your supervising social worker.

Peer Mentors

We have a pool of experienced and skilled foster carers who are available to provide peer mentoring to newly approved foster carers. Peer mentors provide one-to-one support to foster carers and the mentoring takes the form of guiding, supporting and empowering. Sefton Fostering Mentor scheme was set up with the initiative of Sefton Foster Carers who wished to help other Foster Carers starting out on their journey

Amanda shares why she mentors new carers:

"I remember it was a little daunting when we first became foster carers and I would have appreciated having someone experienced to chat to. I hope that by being on the end of the phone, or available for a coffee, that I can help new carers navigate their way through the early days and help to make it even more fun."



Support for Foster Carers and our Children and Young People

Virtual School

Statistics show that children with stable foster homes generally do better in education. Our foster carers get children to school, support learning and help to build aspirations for their future. The Virtual School is there to champion the education of all children in the care of the Local Authority, and offer support, advice, and training to all carers.

Placement Support Workers

Placement Support Workers work closely with foster children, their carers, and children's social work teams, to provide support which will increase placement stability. They provide a wealth of activities such as events, trips and parties throughout the year which promote the social and emotional well-being of children and young people.

Kids Club

'Kids Club' allows foster children to come together in a safe environment to take part in activities such as artwork, playing games or sports and days out. The activities help children to build confidence and friendships.

Stable Lives

An exciting partnership with a local charity, Stable Lives (Equestrian Centre) means children and young people can benefit from a 6-week bespoke programme for foster children to attend throughout the year. This therapeutic experience includes grooming, feeding, bonding and nurturing relationships with the horses.

Participation Officer

Sefton's Participation Officer supports and engages with children and young people through group meetings and activities, to ensure their voices are heard and that they play an active role in shaping the way our services are delivered.



Youth Ambassadors

Young people aged 11-15 years who meet every two weeks to discuss the issues that matter to young people in care. The group have been involved in a number of exciting projects including the design of Young People's Guides, Sefton Pledge and Monthly Awards.

Making A Difference (MAD) Group

Young people aged 16+ meet regularly and have been involved in a number of exciting projects and consultations. Representatives from the group sit on the Corporate Parenting Board and are involved in interviewing new staff. Group members receive payment for their contributions.