



Hythe House
Support

Fostering
excellence



Piecing lives together

Hythe House Support is an independent fostering agency based in Sittingbourne, Kent.

We are registered with Ofsted and are a member of the London Councils Consortium.

We operate under the regulations laid down in the Care Standards Act 2000, and are committed to not only meeting, but exceeding, the national minimum standards for independent fostering agencies.

Our priority is to provide children and young people with a safe, caring, homely environment, while offering a professional service to meet their individual needs.

We believe that the needs of the child are at the very centre of everything we do. We listen to children, and respect their views.

“The agency doesn't forget about my own family and children; this is a personal touch I've not seen in other agencies...”
foster carer

Welcome!

Thank you for taking the time to read this brochure and learn more about what we do. I hope you find it interesting. It's not a flashy brochure, because that's not how we are. We built this agency around a kitchen table, and that table still has pride of place in our office, where it reminds us of our roots and values.

This agency rests at the very heart of my family. With my husband and sons, I was a foster carer to many children from 1987 until 2003, when, as a family, we created Hythe House Support to continue this commitment. Our mission is to put children first, and ensure that the fostering experience is a positive experience. Children need to feel equal among their peers, and to be shown respect by adults in their lives. They need a safe, loving environment, appropriate professional support and above all, to have their voices heard – loud and clear.

My own childhood experience of being in care, means I never lose sight of the child's experience in the fostering process. I know what it means to be apart from your family, and the emotional impact this can have. But we, and the special people who become foster carers with Hythe House Support, can make an enormous, positive difference in children's lives.

We hope very much that you will decide to become a carer with Hythe House Support, and be a part of this achievement.

Maggie Duffy
Founder,
Hythe House Support Ltd



Fostering placements

Hythe House Support expects high standards, passion and dedication from our staff and from our foster carers. Many of our carers have many years of fostering experience, and all are caring and committed to their work.

All potential foster carers applying to Hythe House Support undergo a rigorous vetting process, training and approval stages. Once an initial enquiry to become a foster carer is made, a member of our care staff will carry out a home visit to ensure the suitability of the accommodation and to discuss the negatives and positives of this demanding role. At this stage the applicant is advised of the various checks to be carried out,

and the training and monitoring requirements.

All carers receive intensive initial training, and training continues throughout their career with us, in all aspects of the fostering role, and the difficulties many of these children have faced in their lives.

After vetting, all carers are approved by an independent panel, and reviewed annually.

“There are excellent systems in place for ensuring that foster carers and foster children have a say in the way that the service is run.”
Ofsted

A supervising social worker is available to fostering families at all times. In addition to their professional expertise, carers meet each other frequently and use each other as a valuable source of support and experience.

Referrals can be made by Local Authorities via our office at Hythe House in Sittingbourne. Our matching process, which has been described by Ofsted as one of the

agency's strengths, ensures that children are placed with a family that can truly nurture them and meet their needs.

If we feel that we cannot meet the needs of the child properly and well, we prefer not to take the referral. Looked after children have often had so much disruption in their lives, that an unsuccessful placement is the last thing they need.





Our other services

Hythe House Support offers a range of services to fully support children and their carers.

Therapy and counselling

We employ professional, experienced child psychotherapists and child psychologists to support children in our care who need this assistance.

All therapeutic services are provided at actual cost to local authorities; we do not build in any administrative or overhead cost for this provision. We feel very strongly that if a child needs therapeutic support,

they should receive it – quickly, appropriately and cost effectively. With expenditure a major factor for local authorities, we don't want any child to be prevented from accessing the help they need. We have a private therapy room at our offices to provide a safe, quiet space for sessions.

Respite

Everyone needs a break sometimes and foster carers are no exception. We pay for 28 days' respite for

foster carers, and make sure that it's a positive, fun experience for the child that they really enjoy and look forward to.

Preschool Nursery

Hythe House Support owns a children's nursery in Sittingbourne, registered with Ofsted, which provides both day care and a holiday club for up to 30 children aged 2 – 8 years.

Training

We provide comprehensive training when a foster carer joins us, and then regularly throughout their career, with training sessions held at least monthly.

24 hour support

Our out-of-hours support help line is available to carers at any time of the day or night in the event that help or advice is needed.

Kids talk...

We promise to the children in our care that we will provide you with a safe, warm and welcoming home. We will listen to you and take your views into account. We will support your education and help you stay in touch with your birth family, if that's safe for you.

Above all, we will be on your side.

'My foster carer is kind and fair.'

'We go out a lot and have fun.'

'I feel supported and part of the Hythe House family.'

'What are the things you don't like about where you live?' 'Nothing!'

All the above quotes are by looked after children, taken from Annual Review paperwork.

...and parents talk

Birth parents often remain an extremely important part of their children's life, and can expect to be treated with respect and understanding by Hythe House Support. We promote safe, positive contact between children and their birth parents where this is possible and desirable, and foster carers are fully trained to support this aspect of the child's life.

'I completely trust my child's carers and know he is in safe hands.'

birth parent of a looked after child

'I am 'over the moon' about my child's carers and the school at Hythe House. My son is very happy and well looked after. I cannot thank (the carers) enough for caring for my son... but I still feel like his mum.'

birth parent of a looked after child

The agency promotes family ties and encourages the young people to maintain contact with their family members where this is appropriate.'

Ofsted

Source: Feedback from birth parents of looked after children and Ofsted report.



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Hythe House Support Ltd: SC043609
Lyndhurst Nursery: EY292410

DFES Registration No.
Hythe House Education: 886/6107

Could you piece a life back together?



“ I really feel
I've achieved
something
in helping this
child.”
foster carer

Children looked after by Hythe House Support have not been photographed for this brochure in order to protect their privacy and identity. All quotes are taken directly from 2010/2011 Fostering Panel paperwork and reflect feedback from current foster carers, birth parents and the children they look after, or from the most recent Ofsted reports on Hythe House Support (2010) and Hythe House Education (2008).