

**North London Fostering Consortium
Parent and Child Fostering Scheme**

MY STORY



**NORTH LONDON
ADOPTION
AND
FOSTERING
CONSORTIUM**



Dear

This book has been put together to help you and your foster carer look at all the different ways you will be caring for your baby. You will be living with a specialist foster carer, whose job it is to help you to develop and improve your parenting, and also to make a note of the things that you do well and where you have to develop skills. You will see these notes and will have the opportunity to write what you think too.

This book contains information, some questions about yourself and your history and a programme for developing and assessing your ability to be a mum. You will also be working through a Workbook with your foster carer; there is a different section for each week so you can see how your parenting is developing. You and your carer will make notes and discuss your progress. These books are a way that you can show the foster carer, social worker and Guardian how you are caring for your baby.



Your baby's picture:

What is my story?

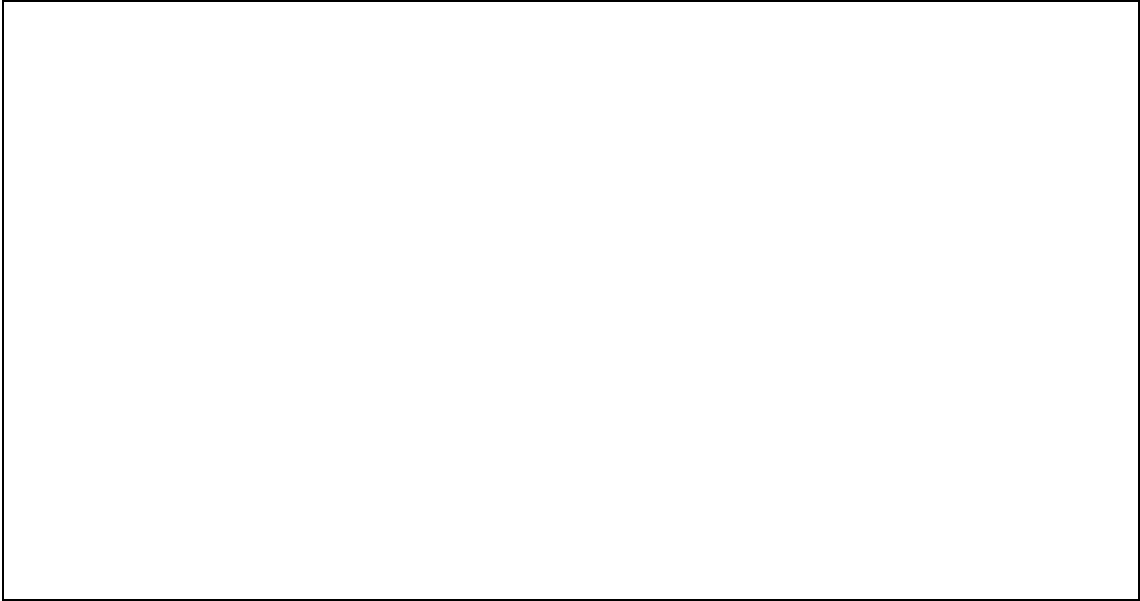


HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN YOU LEARNED YOU WERE PREGNANT?

Did you have children already? Was it your first pregnancy? Who did you tell? Who supported you?

The birth

Did the birth go to plan? How long did you stay in hospital? Where did you take the baby to?



Signed:

Signed foster carer:

Dates discussed

CHANGES

What changes have you had to make since you found out that you were pregnant?

What changes have been hard to make?

What changes do you think you will need to make in the next few weeks?

What changes do you think you will need to make in the years to come?

Signed:.....

Signed foster carer:

Dates discussed:

BABIES AND CHILDREN I KNOW

What experience have you had with children?

Child's name	Age	What we have done together

Signed.....

Signed foster carer.....

Dates discussed

MY CHILDHOOD

When we become pregnant most people start to think more about how they grew up. This is because most people want to treat their babies as best they can and they do not want to repeat mistakes they may feel their parents/carers made. Some people want to copy the way their parents brought them up, others deliberately decide to do things differently because they don't agree with the way the people who brought them up treated them.

Who brought you up?

What did that person (or those people) do that you think showed they were a good parent?

Do you think the person/people who brought you up could have done anything better?

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What will you do the same as that person (or those people) and what will you do differently?

<i>The same</i>	<i>Differently</i>

What do you think that will teach your child?

Signed.....

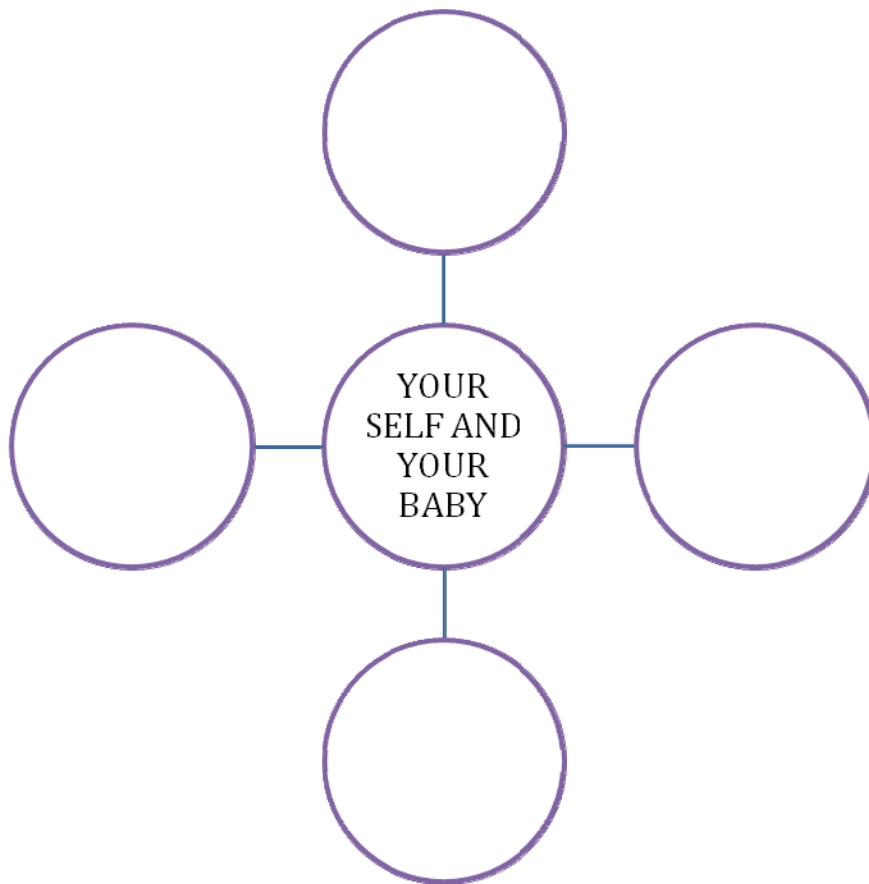
Signed foster carer.....

Dates discussed.....

MY SUPPORT

Who helps and supports you?

If you like, you can draw an ecomap with yourself in the middle and family, friends and professionals who are in your support network around you. You can draw in extra circles if you need too – draw the people you are closest too nearest to your circle, and those who you see less often, or don't like so much, further from your circle.



How do these people help and support you?

What other support and help do you think you need and how can you get this?

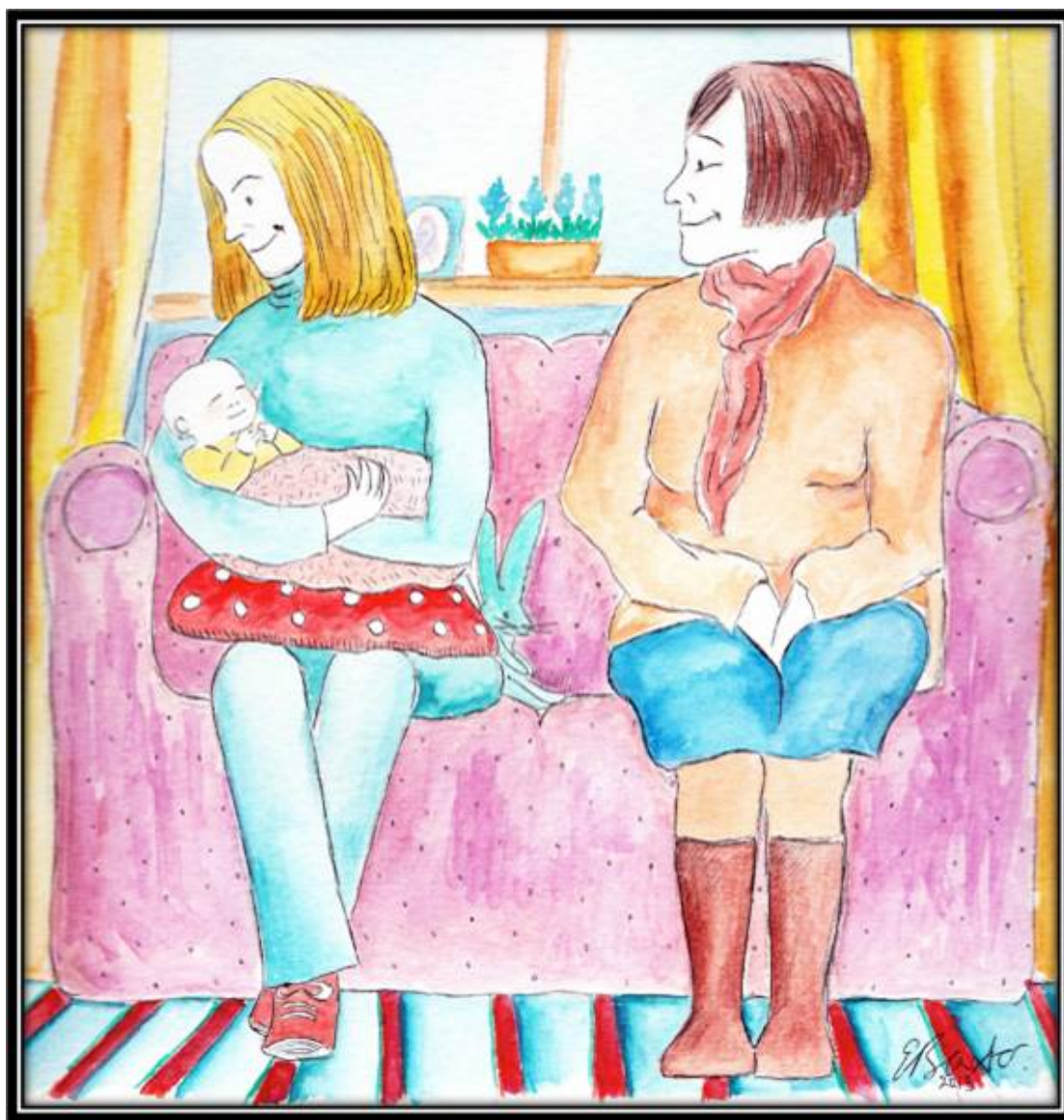
Signed:

Signed foster carer:

Dates discussed:

CONTACT DETAILS

While you are living with your foster carer there are a number of professionals who will be involved with you and your baby. It might feel uncomfortable, as though they are watching you, asking questions and writing notes about you and your baby; however it is important to remember that the assessment only lasts for twelve weeks and it is an opportunity to show your baby's social worker you can care for your child. It is very important that you communicate with the professionals and you can write down their numbers in this book to help you remember them.



Your social worker

Your social worker's name is:.....

Their telephone number is:.....

- 1) If you were in care yourself or have any type of disability you may have your own social worker. Their job is to work out with you what help you need and to try to arrange that you get that help. They need you to be willing to discuss your situation with them in order that they can do their best for you.
- 2) If you need to speak to you social worker, ring them on their number. If they are not available leave a message for them to ring you back.

Your child's social worker

Your child's social worker's name is :

Phone number:

Your child's social worker's job is to make sure that your child is happy and well looked after. This includes checking that you are doing a good job of taking care of her/him. This is why, during the placement, the social worker will do an "assessment" and talk with you and your foster carer about all the different ways in which you need to look after your child.

The assessing social worker

The social worker doing the parenting assessment's name is:.....

Their telephone number is:.....

1. Sometimes the parenting assessment is done by your child's social worker, and sometimes the parenting assessment is done by another social worker given specific responsibility for this. Find out which arrangement will happen for you and your child.
2. The assessing social worker will meet regularly with you gather all the information from the work you do with your foster carer in your placement,

as well as information from records and other professionals involved with you and your baby. All this will inform the recommendations she makes.

Your solicitor

Your solicitor's name is:.....

Their telephone number is:.....

- 1) If you and your child have anything to do with a court or care proceedings, you should seek advice from a solicitor. A solicitor will help you write down what you and they think the court needs to know about you and your child. They are specially trained and qualified to do this.
- 2) You do not need to pay for a solicitor (your solicitor will be paid by the government).
- 3) If you do not have a solicitor ask your child's social worker for a list of ones who work locally and do this sort of work.

The barrister

- 1) Sometimes your solicitor will ask a barrister to represent you when your child's future is being considered by a court.
- 2) Like the solicitor, the barrister's job is to argue for what you want and they will be able to give you advice as to how you should deal with the court.

Your child's guardian

Your child's guardian is called:.....

Their telephone number is

The guardian's job is to get to know the case, your child, you and anyone else involved and to tell the judge or magistrates what they think should happen for your child. The guardian is not part of Children's Services and will not always agree with the social worker.

The health visitor or family nurse

Your child's health visitor is called:.....

Their telephone number is.....

The baby clinic is at.....

Times when it is open.....

Health visitors work with parents and their children from when the baby is born until the child's fifth birthday. Your child's health visitor will come to see you soon after your child is born and will either visit you at home or ask you to come to the clinic for immunisations and health checks.

Their job is:

- To support you in parenting your child.
- To give you advice about how to keep your child healthy, including when s/he needs to have vaccinations.
- To give you advice about dealing with minor conditions like nappy rash, colic and cradle cap.
- To give you advice about feeding your child, including how to start on solid foods.

If you need to speak to the health visitor you can ring her or go to see her at the baby clinic. If you ring and she is not available, leave a message for her to ring you back.

Signed:

Signed foster carer:

Dates discussed:

WHAT IS THE ASSESSMENT ABOUT?

The person writing the assessment report will visit you throughout the placement in order to assess your parenting and write a detailed report for Children's Service and, if relevant, for the Courts. The assessing social worker will be writing about you and your baby under the following headings:

Basic care – for example this means:

- Taking care of your child's health; for example taking them to the doctor or the health visitor.
- Keeping your child at the right temperature, providing the right food and drink for them.
- Feeding and clothing your baby.

Ensuring safety – for example this means:

- Protecting your child from danger – not leaving newborns unattended and not having them in your bed, covering up plug sockets and having stair gates when your baby is able to move around.
- Keeping your child away from people or places you think will be dangerous to them.

Emotional warmth – for example this means:

- Making your child feel important to you.
- Your ability to give your child love, praise and encouragement.
- Showing good behaviour towards your child—not shouting when you get angry, being calm and patient.

Stimulation – for example this means:

- Choosing toys your child will like and playing with them.
- Talking or singing to your child even before they are able to talk themselves.
- Taking your child on trips and to activities such as swimming or to play group.

Guidance and boundaries – for example this means:

- Being calm and patient when you are in stressful situations with other people.
- Helping your child to cope with disappointments and times you have to say 'no'.
- Helping your child develop good social behaviour with other children and adults.

Stability – for example this means

- Providing a stable family environment e.g. where there are few arguments and a quiet calm feeling.
- Providing a safe home, where dangerous things aren't left around the house.
- Keeping your child in contact with friends and family

Some information regarding each of these six areas is provided later in this book for you to look at and discuss with your foster carer. It is important that you work together with the foster carer, filling in the workbook regularly. Doing this will give you opportunities to show what you know and can do and also to be helped to improve in any areas that may be confusing or difficult for you.

Signed:

Signed foster carer:

Dates discussed: