

## Media Release

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### Guernsey, Think about changing a life this Foster Care Fortnight

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The Family Placement Service is calling on families in the Bailiwick of Guernsey to step up to the role of fostering, as Foster Care Fortnight™ 2020 gets underway today.

The Fostering Network's annual awareness campaign, Foster Care Fortnight™, is taking place from the 11<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> May all across the UK with a theme this year of #thisisfostering. The Family Placement Service use this opportunity every year to highlight foster care in the Bailiwick and to encourage the local community to consider fostering a child or young person. Whether Fostering is something you've considered for some time or thought about more recently, Foster Care Fortnight™ is a great time to see whether it might be right for you or your family.

Fostering offers children and young people a home when they are unable to live with their birth family. Sometimes children only stay with a foster family for a few days, while others will live with their foster family for their entire childhood and beyond. Foster carers make a significant difference in the lives of fostered children and young people, helping them to flourish and changing their future. Not only does fostering vastly benefit the children and young people, but it is also a life changing experience for the foster carers and their families.

Supervising Social Worker Emma Beaven, who focuses on recruitment and retention of carers, said "The focus of this year's campaign will largely be Online and through the media but we hope that everyone can still join in on some of the things we have planned to raise awareness of fostering in Guernsey and encourage the recruitment of new foster carers. Keep a look out for photos of our Travelling Ted's, Joe and Swissroll, who have been making the most of their 2hrs exercise each day to explore different parts of the island. Can you guess where they are? You might also come across pebbles that have been painted with #thisisfostering and #FCF2020 around the island. A big thank you to Love Pebbles Gsy who made us 14 of her fantastic creations and the rest have all been beautifully decorated by some of our Looked after Children, carers and staff."

The Family Placement Service is also pleased to announce they have launched their new look website to promote fostering, adoption and short break care for children with disabilities in Guernsey. Whilst the service has maintained a website for a number of years, the time has come to provide a more up to date and user friendly portal for people to find out more information and think about how they might get involved. The new website can be located at [www.guernseystercare.com](http://www.guernseystercare.com).

Alongside the new website, the Family Placement Service is launching a Facebook page to provide another way to connect directly with the community about all things fostering and adoption in Guernsey. The page will aim to keep people up to date with news and events from the Service as well as highlighting information and research relevant to looked after children. Check in regularly with this page on Facebook, located at '*Guernsey Foster Care and Adoption*', throughout Foster Care Fortnight™ and on an ongoing basis to keep up to date with the Service.

Karen Reade, Team Manager of the Family Placement Service said "I have been working with foster carers for over 25 years and I have seen what an incredible difference foster carers make to children and young people. Foster carers literally change lives. If you want to be part of this life changing role and think you could offer the support, stability and care to help change a child's future, please get in touch with us at [change@guernseystercare.com](mailto:change@guernseystercare.com) or phone us on 713230. Our team of social workers are ready to answer any questions you have about fostering and we look forward to speaking to you. "

There is a current need for people who can care for pre-school aged children, sibling groups and teenagers. On the back of the successful campaign earlier in the year, there continues to be a need for short break carers who can give flexible time to support children with disabilities who are living at home with their families. Alongside this, the Family Placement Service is also actively wishing to speak with individuals and families who are interested in adoption.

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