



brighterfuturesforchildren.org

**BfC Independent Fostering Agency
Mockingbird Hub Home Carer
Job Description & Person Specification**



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Job Information

Post Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BFFC IFA Mockingbird Hub Home Carer
Reports to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IFA Manager – Carer Recruitment and Retention
Associated income:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paid through a combination of a foster carer’s fee and allowances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster carer’s fee - <u>£600</u> per week (this includes providing 10 sleep-over nights a month and mileage of up to 200 miles a month) Additional fees for each additional sleep-over night provided (at rate of <u>£65</u> per night) Excess mileage payment of 45 pence per mile (after the first 200 miles per month) Allowance of up to <u>£150</u> per month to cover costs of arranging / hosting social events
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home based, but providing support to a group of specified carers living in or local to Reading

Job Purpose

Brighter Futures for Children is improving outcomes for Reading's children, young people and families.

We are an independent, not-for-profit-company, wholly owned by Reading Borough Council. Our responsibility is to deliver quality children's services, early help, education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services in the borough.

Brighter Futures for Children’s fostering services are provided through our Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) which sits alongside our inhouse Adoption & Permanence Service. The IFA is headed up by a registered manager who reports to the head of service for Corporate Parenting (the responsible individual), or in their absence to Brighter Futures for Children’s service manager corporate Parenting.

Our IFA is also part of the government led Local Authority Fostering South East initiative in relation to foster carer recruitment and retention. We are one of the 20 local authority fostering services that make up the South East regional group and we are working closely with the other local authorities that are within our sub-cluster: Oxfordshire, West Berkshire, Wokingham, Bracknell Forest, Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead, Kingston, and Richmond, in order to improve the recruitment and retention of foster carers across the south east region.

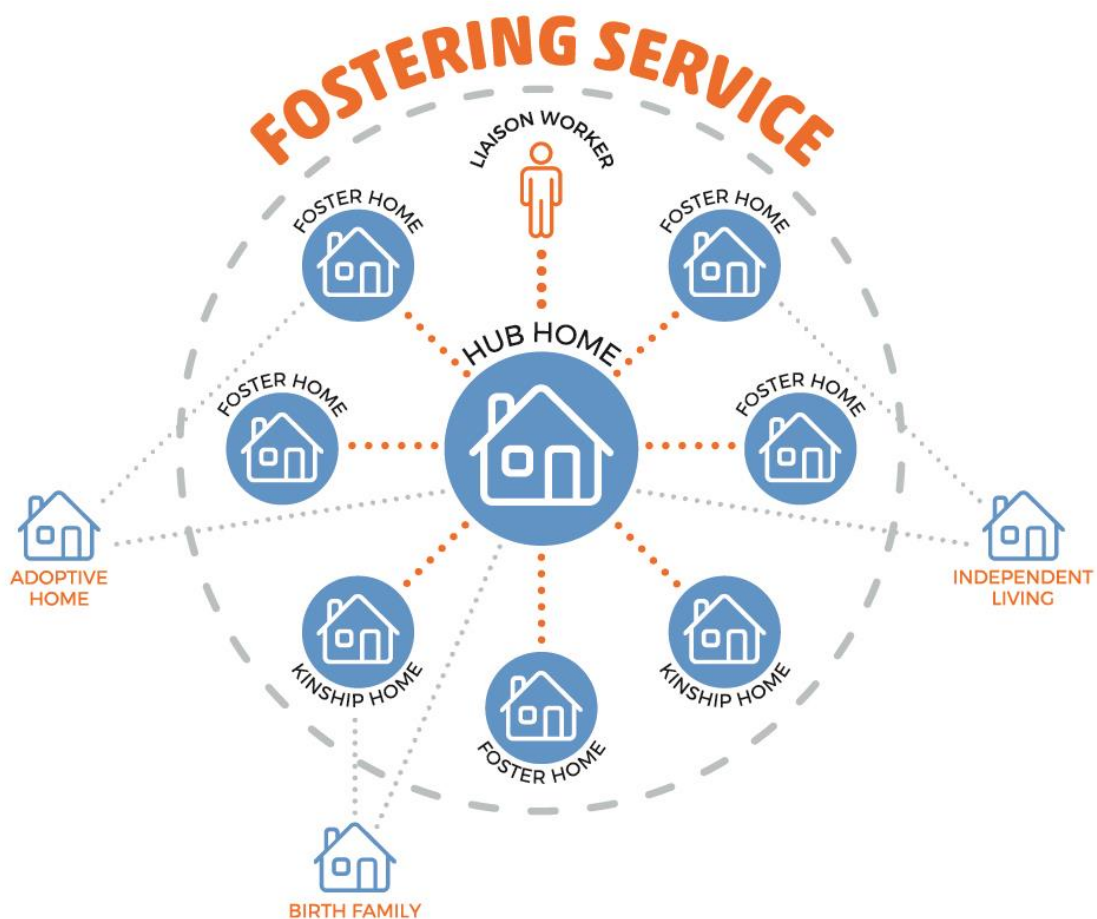
In line with the Government’s agenda to improve local authority fostering services, Brighter Futures for Children has also committed to establishing our first foster carer support hub, based on the Fostering Network Mockingbird Family Model. This is a new initiative, and we are keen to recruit a Hub home carer to work with key staff and managers within the IFA to establish the model and monitor its effectiveness as a way of supporting our in-house IFA carers.



Working with our IFA manager for carer recruitment & retention, our retention/mockingbird liaison officer, and our IFA social workers, you will provide peer support to other foster carers, sleepovers and short breaks. and group social activities.

About the Mockingbird programme

Mockingbird is a global award-winning programme led by The Fostering Network in the UK. It delivers sustainable foster care using an evidence-based model structured around the support and relationships an extended family provides. The model nurtures the relationships between children, young people and foster families supporting them to build a resilient and caring community. Led by a hub home carer and liaison worker, the constellation community offers vital peer support and guidance alongside social activities and sleepovers to strengthen relationships and permanence. The Mockingbird programme is an alternative method of delivering foster care which centres on the idea of an extended network of family support. It empowers families to support each other and overcome problems before they escalate and offers children a more positive experience of care. To find out about the national programme visit www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/mockingbird





Being a Brighter Futures for Children Mockingbird hub home carer

Hub home carers are crucial to the success of the Mockingbird programme and each individual constellation. Hub home carers act as the glue that unites the satellite families in each constellation together into a community.

Being a hub home carer is a full-time role for experienced foster carers. To be eligible to apply for our hub home carer role, you **must**:

- be a current approved Brighter Futures for Children foster carer
- ideally have a minimum of three years fostering experience, including experience of short-term fostering

Note: Experience of caring for a range of different children and young people, including those with special needs, is highly desirable but not essential

- have completed your preparation training, post approval induction period, and the national Training Support and Development Standards
- live in or local to Reading Borough
- be a car driver with access to a car
- have two empty beds for planned and emergency sleepovers for children and young people.

Note: While a Hub home carer will need to have at least one spare bedroom, the second bed can be a put-you-up that can be used by a child or young person in a living room or dining room in the case of a sleep-over being required in an emergency.

As a hub home carer, you will:

- offer planned and emergency sleepovers for children and young people living in the constellation
- support and mentor satellite families
- plan and host regular social events for all the families in the constellation
- host and support contact with siblings and birth families
- attend and coordinate training for carers in the constellation.

Person specification

To be a hub home carer you will need to be:

- child centred
- approachable
- comfortable with inviting other foster carers and children / young people into your home
- confident, energetic, and resourceful
- experienced in managing relationships
- able to develop authentic relationships with people from different backgrounds and of different ages, ethnicities, and genders
- empathetic and willing to coach others
- organised but flexible, and able to cope with the unexpected
- capable of prioritising the needs of a complex group
- able to take on a leadership role
- able to work collaboratively with Brighter Futures for Children IFA staff and on occasions children's social workers and/or other members of the team around a child.



You will also need to have:

- a strong support network of your own
- an established knowledge base in respect of:
 - children and young people's behaviour and development
 - safer caring and communicating about high-risk situations
 - the local authority's role as a Corporate Parent
 - the foster carer's role as a member of the professional team around the child
 - Brighter Futures for Children IFA's fostering policies and procedures.

Applications are welcome from both single carers and couples.

Note: Being a home hub carer **will not** fit easily with short-term fostering. However, applications are welcome from carers who have an established and long-term matched placement(s), and from carers who are currently between placements.

How to apply

To find out more about the Mockingbird programme and the role of a hub home carer in Brighter Futures for Children's Independent Fostering Agency, please contact Steffi Roth (IFA Registered Manager) at: Steffi.roth@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Expressions of interest must be received by: 5th January 2025 (midnight).

Expected interview date: 14th January 2025.

Please note: Interviews will be held in person at the Civic Offices in Reading. If couples apply to be hub home carers, both partners will be invited to interview.

Applicants who are invited for interview will be asked to prepare a short presentation in advance on a topic that will be shared when their interview is confirmed.

Hilary Loades

September 2024