

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 Rutland Council recognises and values the contribution that foster carers make to society and especially the lives of children in care. We understand that foster carers who do other work in addition to fostering need some flexibility in their working arrangements to meet the needs of their fostered child.

1.2 We are committed to support any staff member who is a foster carer or an approved kinship carer.

1.4 The process of seeking approval to become foster carers is a lengthy one and places a number of reasonable but demanding expectations upon prospective carers, particularly in relation to the training, assessment and approval process.

1.5 We will extend the terms of this policy to prospective foster or kinship carers who have begun the formal process of seeking approval and registration as carers.

## **2. Aim**

2.1 In accordance with our Flexible Working Policy and Ways of Working, we offer staff the opportunity to work flexibly where this is compatible with the demands of their job. Our flexible working, emergency time off for dependents and parental leave policies all apply to foster carers and approved kinship carers.

2.2 This policy sets out the additional time off that we will offer prospective and existing foster carers and kinship carers.

## **3. Eligibility**

3.1 This policy applies to staff who:

- are applying to become foster carers
- are approved foster carers and have a child in placement (or have had a child in placement for 75% of the previous 12 months) or are an approved kinship carer
- and have three months or more employment service with Rutland Council.

## **4. Time off**

4.1 Rutland Council values and will support foster carers and approved kinship carers by giving paid time off in any 12-month period as follows:

- assessment and initial training prior to approval as a foster carer - up to three days
- attendance at panel for approval – one day
- placement of a child/young person, for example child review meetings, annual foster carer review meeting and training – up to five days per annum.

The employee's line manager will approve the leave and agree with the employee when it is to be taken, taking into account individual circumstances and operational requirements of the business. The leave will be considered and approved on a pro rata basis.

## **5. Procedure for requesting time off**

5.1 The request for leave should outline the reason and the amount of leave required.

5.2 Where more than the maximum entitlement of fostering friendly paid leave is requested (as outlined above), the line manager and the staff member should discuss other means available e.g. annual leave, time off in lieu.

5.2 The staff member should send the request for leave for authorisation by the line manager who should record the paid leave in Agresso.

5.3 If an employee has any queries or issues relating to their request, this should be raised with their line manager.

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