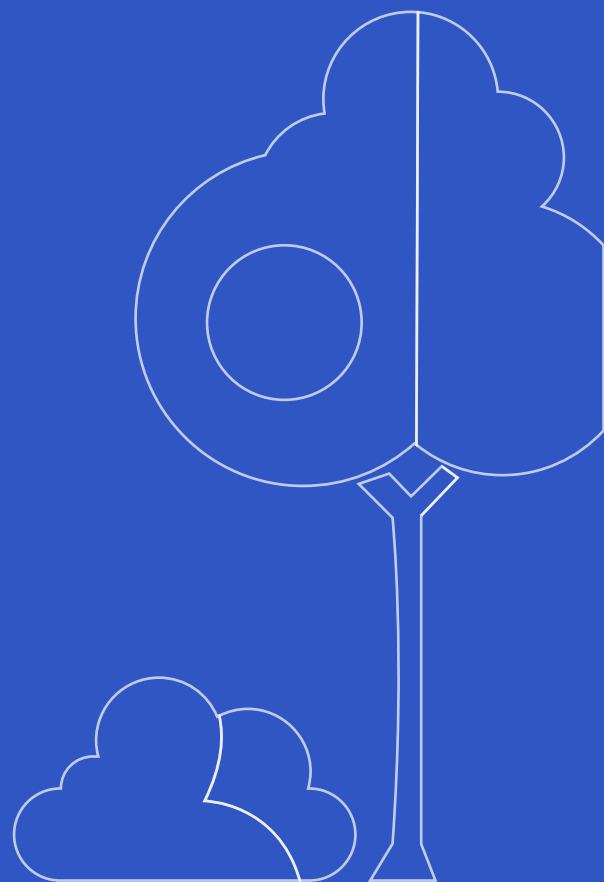




My Time Out **Fostering Guide**

**A young person's guide
to
foster care**

We have made this little guide for you to find out about what happens when children go to live with foster carers.



This guide belongs to:



.....

Your supervising social worker (SWW)

.....

Your family support worker

.....

Your social worker

.....

Your independent reviewing officer

.....

Your guardian

.....



Foster placements

Time Out Fostering will place you with a family that is kind, caring and will accept you and respect you.

It is important that you experience family life that is warm, loving, and safe and that helps you to make positive change.

You will be given support to help you develop your own identity, confidence and self-worth.

If you have any disabilities or specific needs these will be understood and taken into account.

Your foster carers will understand how important contact with your family is and will support you through this.

You will be treated as the foster carer treats their own children.

Your foster carers will give you the opportunity to experience an exciting, fun filled family life.

Time Out Fostering will help and support you if you want to make a compliment or complaint and will give you any contact details you might need to do so.

What is Time Out Fostering?



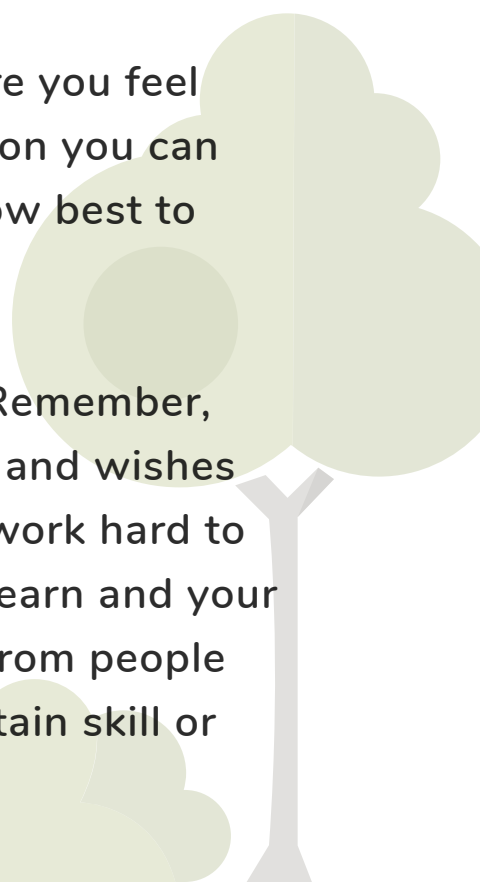
Time Out Fostering (TOF) is a fostering agency. We put young people, who need care, in touch with foster carers who would like to look after them.

We spend a lot of time with every foster carer who works with us. We check and make sure that they're the right type of person to be a foster carer. We work to very high standards set by the government.

We make sure they want to care for young people and that they've got the space in their home for somewhere for you to sleep. We also stay in touch with them to make sure that if they ever need help or support, we're there for them.

We want you to have somewhere to live where you feel safe and have the support to be the best person you can be. Together you will all make a plan about how best to look after you called a 'care plan'.

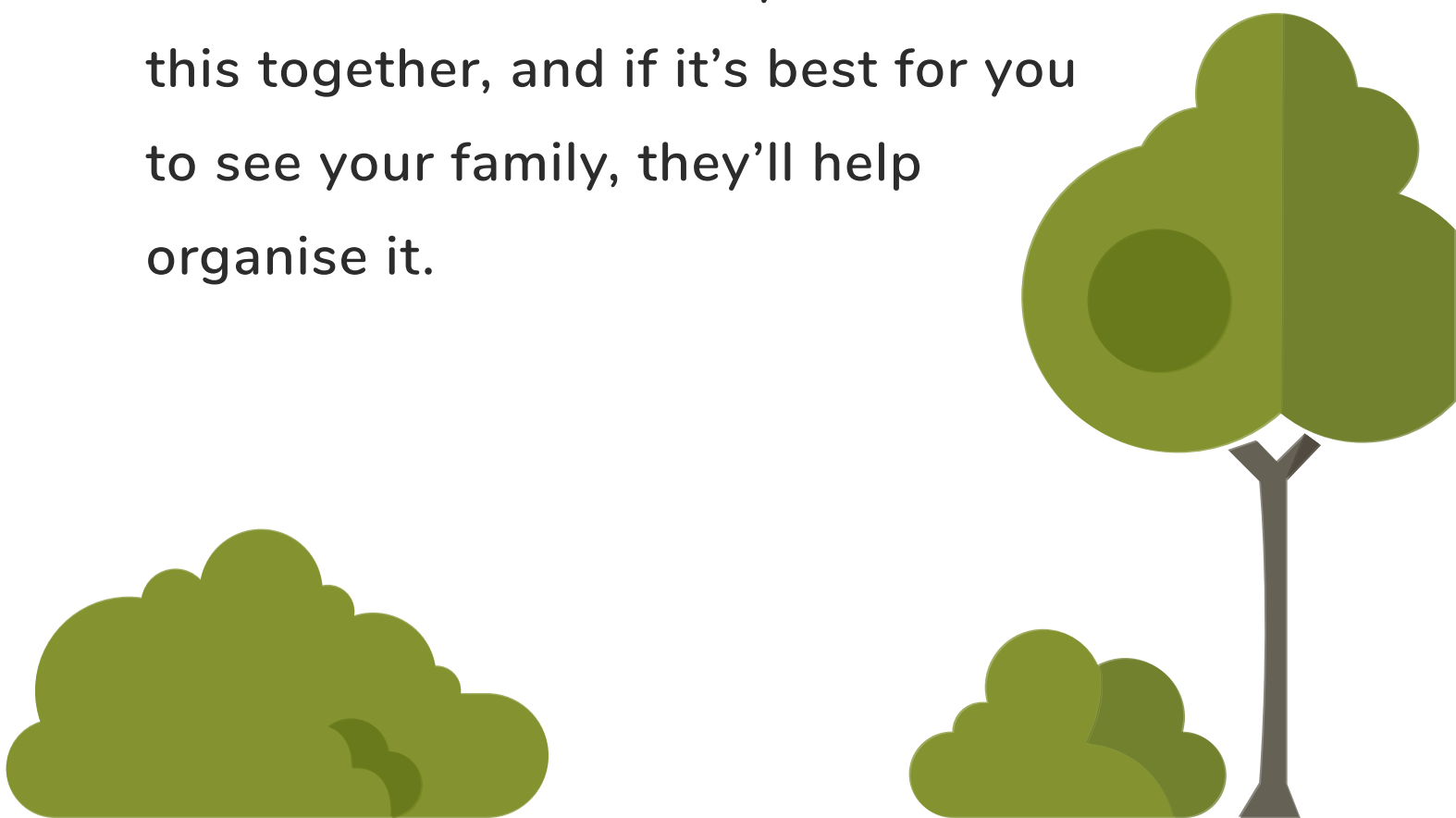
Foster carers come from a range of cultures. Remember, we'll always try to make sure that your needs and wishes are carefully matched with foster carers. We work hard to make sure you go to a school where you can learn and your health is looked after. We can get extra help from people if you need counselling, or support with a certain skill or activity.



When can I see my family?

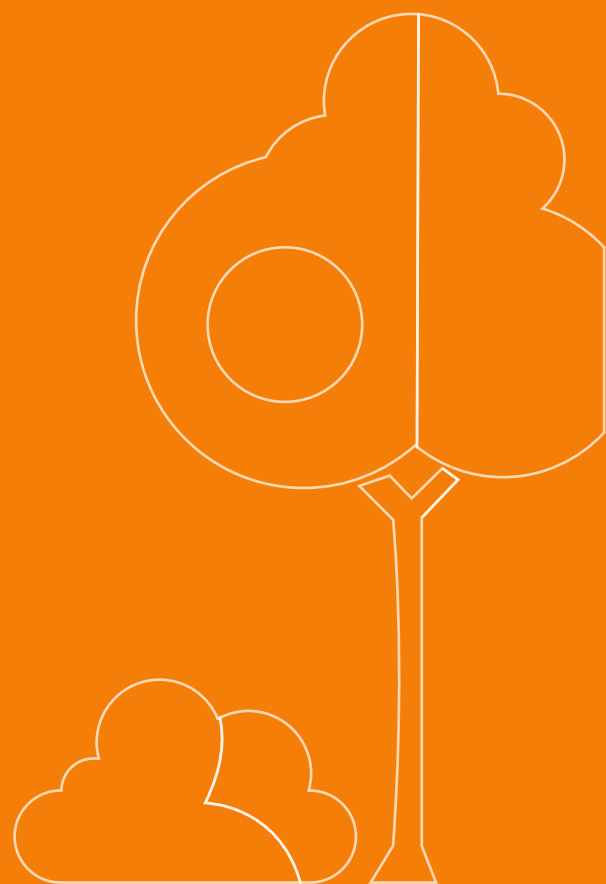
Your social worker will help you keep in touch with your family.

If there are people you'd like to visit, like grandparents or friends, please tell your foster carer or social worker. Meeting your family might be upsetting, and how you feel about it is important. You, your social worker and foster family will chat about this together, and if it's best for you to see your family, they'll help organise it.



What will my foster carer do?

Your foster carer will look after you while you're away from your family. They'll do things like take you to school, make sure that you're healthy and support any hobbies you might have.



We expect all our foster carers to support you by:

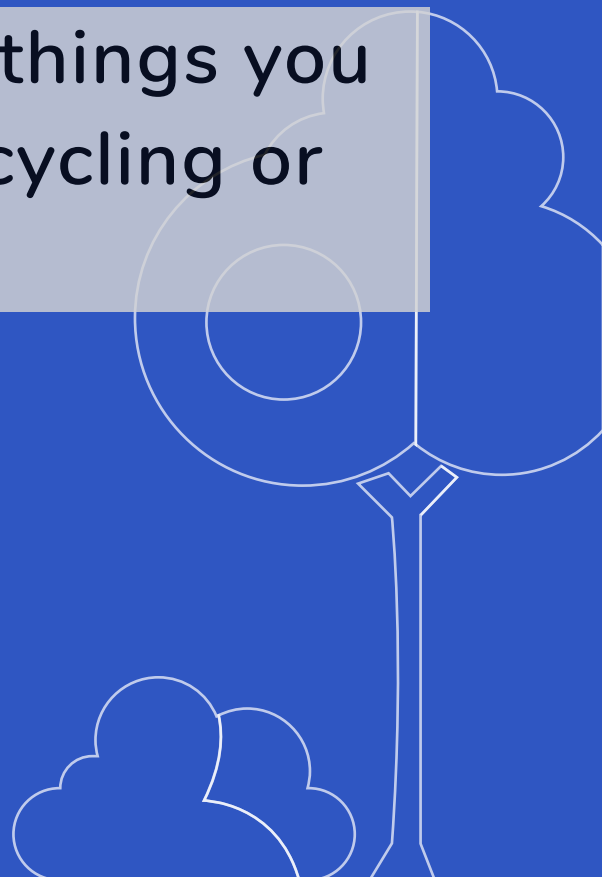
Taking good care of you and making you feel safe

Listen and care for you

Take you to the doctor, dentist or any other person you need

Make sure you get your pocket money and some new clothes

Make sure you do the things you enjoy like swimming, cycling or football



How can I tell Time Out if I am not happy?

Here are the different ways you can let us know that you're not happy about your foster carer or foster family or if there is something that you would like to change about your placement.

Contact your supervising social worker or family support worker:

You can call them on 01903 259900 or

Email Alex at alex@timeoutfostering.co.uk

Email Ali at ali@timeoutfostering.co.uk

Email Drew at drew@timeoutfostering.co.uk

Email Jen at Jen@timeoutfostering.co.uk

Speak to our Service Manager. Alison Young

You can call her on 01903 259900 or email her on: alison@timeoutfostering.co.uk

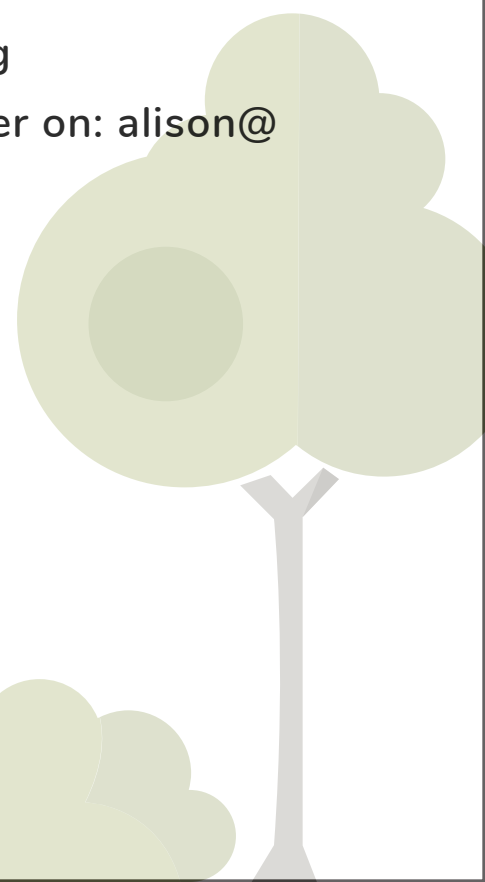
Or write to us at:

17 Oaklands Business Centre

Elm Grove

Worthing

BN11 5LH



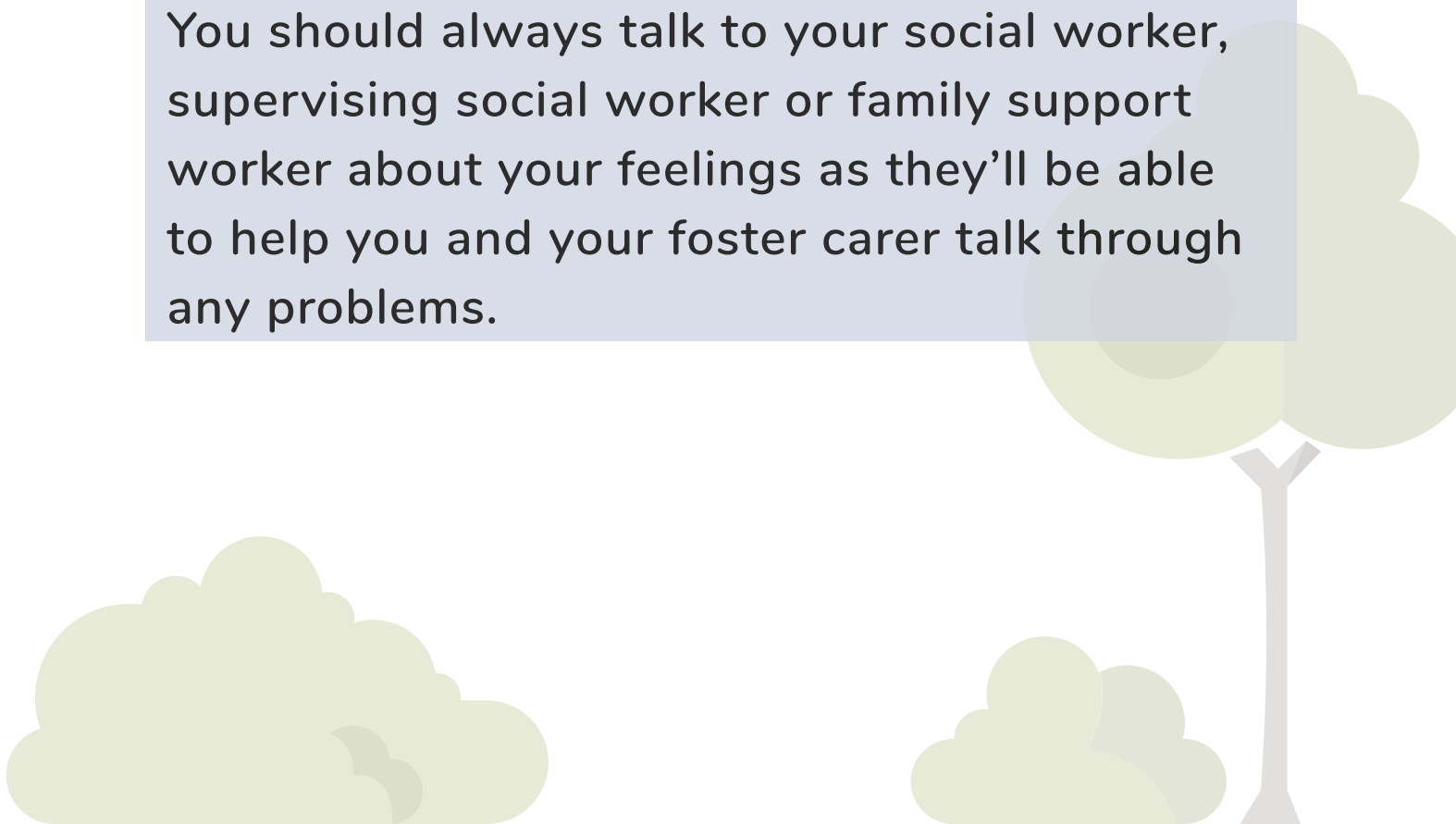
What if I don't like my foster family?

This can be a very difficult and confusing time. You might find that you don't like your foster family because they do things differently from your family, or because you miss your family.

You'll probably come to like your foster family as you get to know them better.

If you're finding it hard to get on with your foster family, talk to them and tell them how you feel. See if you can agree on some changes that will make life better.

You should always talk to your social worker, supervising social worker or family support worker about your feelings as they'll be able to help you and your foster carer talk through any problems.



What if I don't feel listened to?

You can talk to an independent advocate – this is someone who does not work for the local authority or Time Out Fostering and they will help you to be heard and to take part in decisions that affect your life. It involves making sure your rights are respected, and your views and wishes are heard and acted upon by decision-makers. The organisations below can help you find an independent advocate.

A National Voice: 0161 237 5577 info@anationalvoice.org
(Helpline for and by young people in care)

NYAS (National Youth Advocacy Service):
0808 808 1001 help@nyas.net (East Sussex)
Chat room: www.nyas.net

Email AdvocacyService@westsussex.gov.uk
Tel: 033 022 28686 (West Sussex children)

Coram Voice 0808 800 5792 (Helpline for and by young people in care)

Become 0207 251 3117 for switchboard
0800 023 2033 for the care advice line

Help at Hand 0800 5280 731

The Children's Legal Centre 08088 020 008

The Children's Commissioner 0800 528 0731 for children in care

What if I don't like how my foster family treats me?

Your foster family is chosen very carefully and they're given training on how to look after you. However, if you're really unhappy about where you're living or anything else, speak to your social worker or anyone at TOF.

You may be feeling lots of different emotions about leaving your family and moving to a new home. You might have even had to change schools and trying to make new friends.

If talking to your social worker doesn't help and you're still unhappy they can help you make a complaint. Making a complaint is very serious so it's really important you've tried your best to work things out with your foster carer, supervising social worker and your social worker first.



If this is not helpful you can ask to speak to your social worker's boss or the Children's Rights Service at your local authority. If your social worker makes a complaint for you but you think it was not taken seriously enough, you can make a complaint yourself by writing to Ofsted, which is the organisation that checks the work that fostering agencies do.

Please see below for contact details for Ofsted and other child care services:

Ofsted

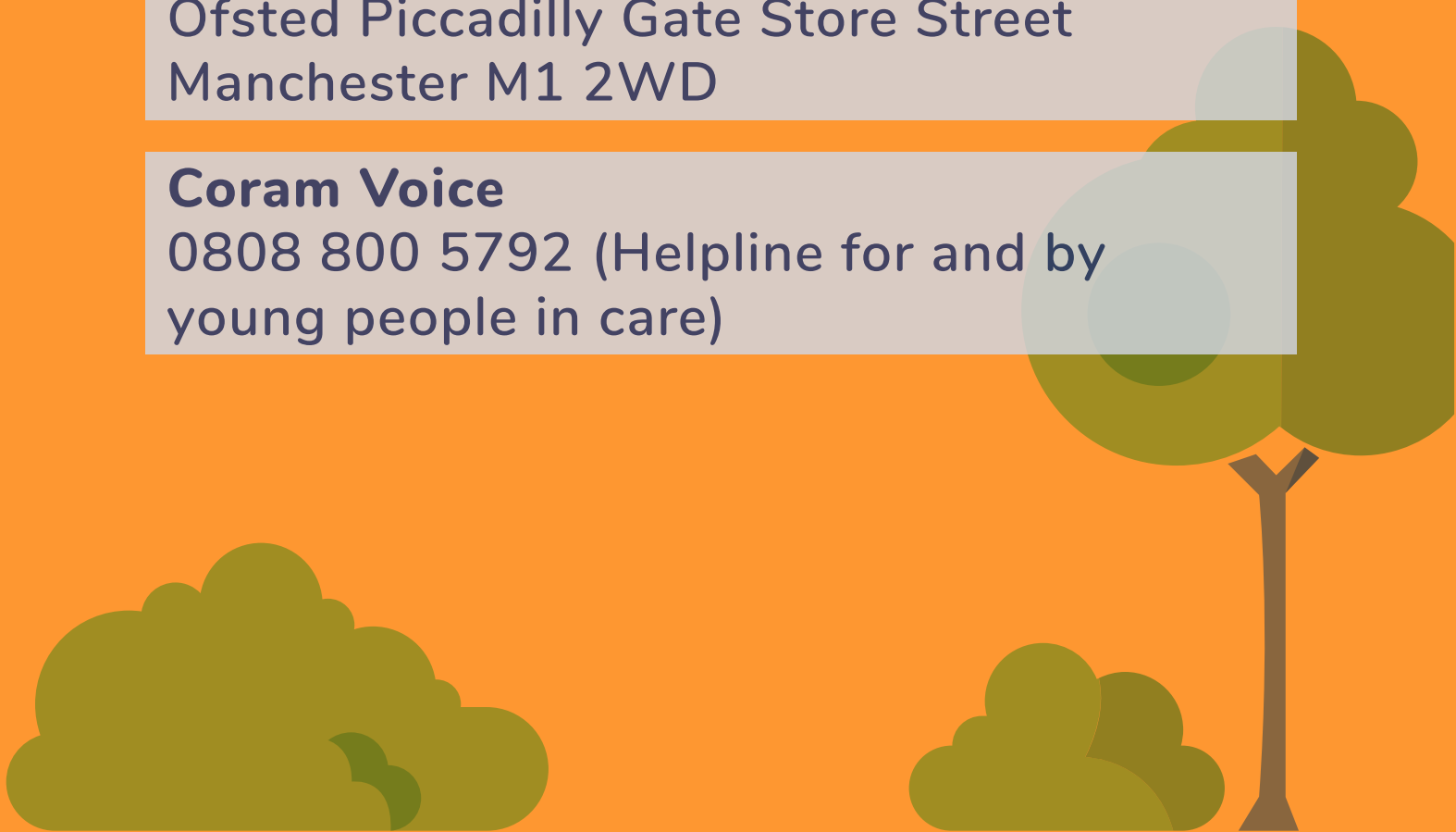
0300 123 1231

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Ofsted Piccadilly Gate Store Street
Manchester M1 2WD

Coram Voice

0808 800 5792 (Helpline for and by
young people in care)



What are they talking about?

A care plan: This is when you and everyone involved with you, parents, carers and social workers all work out what they think is best for your future. Who you will live with for how long, what might happen next, where you go to school and if you need any help with anything? All that kind of stuff. They will all listen to what you are saying and where possible try to do as you ask. We could support you in understanding your Care Plan.

Your file: We keep a file about you. This is kept safe. This has information about you in it. It has records kept by your foster carer, and information on health and education etc. You are welcome to see your file and to add to it. You can access the information either in a file or electronically. Just speak to your family support worker, social worker or ring the office and we will organise this.

Guardian: This is the person who listens to you and speaks for you in a court of law. The Guardian has to be involved in sorting out where you are going to live and with whom. They are there to help you.

Supervised Contact: This is when an adult who could be a social worker or one of our team comes with you to meet your family. They stay with you whilst you see them and make sure that nothing is said or done that will upset you or cause you problems. They are there to help you so that the meeting is as safe and pleasant as can be. It can often be very hard seeing family when you are not living with them.

Personal Education Plan (PEP): This form is about your education. It is for children not living at home. We work with you, your foster family and social worker to look at what is going to help you the

Personal Opportunities Plan (POP): this replaces the PEP when you turn 16 years old. We work with you, your foster family and social worker to look at what is going to help you most with education, training or employment and how we can do this.

Education & Health Care Plan: This form is about your education and any health needs that may affect your learning. We work with you, your foster family, social worker, health professionals and people from the education department (Virtual School) to put together a plan of what support you may need to get the very best from your school. This plan is reviewed every year to make sure you are getting everything you need.

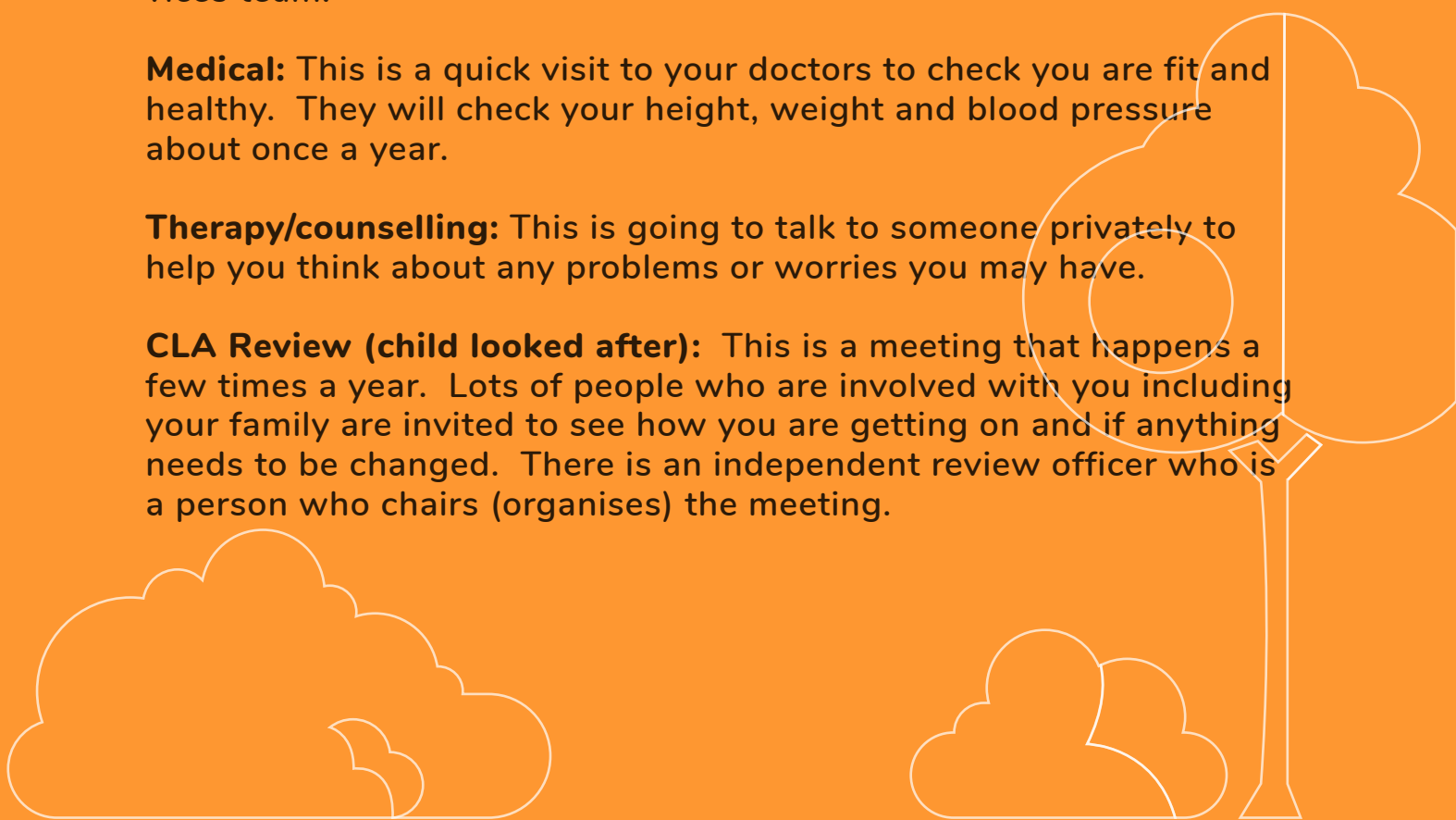
Life Story Work: This is a way of helping you make a collection of information and pictures about you and your family. It will go from when you were born to now. It helps to tell your life story and shows who, what and where has been important to you so far in your life. With the help of your social worker, family and friends we can build up a very special collection that will be very important to you. You may even find out things you did not know or had forgotten that help you to understand who you are.

Local Authority: This is the words used for groups of people who work for the government to support children and adults in the place they live or were born. The name of the team of people looking after you when you are in care (Living away from home) is the social services team.

Medical: This is a quick visit to your doctors to check you are fit and healthy. They will check your height, weight and blood pressure about once a year.

Therapy/counselling: This is going to talk to someone privately to help you think about any problems or worries you may have.

CLA Review (child looked after): This is a meeting that happens a few times a year. Lots of people who are involved with you including your family are invited to see how you are getting on and if anything needs to be changed. There is an independent review officer who is a person who chairs (organises) the meeting.



And Finally.....



Alison Young



Jeremy Cross



Judy Packham

We run Time Out fostering. If you would like to tell us about something to do with your care or suggestions for how we can make things better please ring us on 01903 259900 or email us at:

alison@timeoutfostering.co.uk

judy@timeoutfostering.co.uk

jeremy@timeoutfostering.co.uk

