

# New children's home for the Royal Borough of Kingston

Currently, there are around 128 children from the Royal Borough of Kingston in the care of the council. That means that the council are the 'corporate parent' and are responsible for their safety and wellbeing.

## Foster care

Children enter the foster care system for many reasons. Sadly, some have been victims of physical or sexual abuse, neglect, medical neglect, abandonment, or have suffered the death of a family member.

We are able to find suitable foster families in the local community for many children in our care. However, fostering is not appropriate for some young people. For those children, we look at children's home placements.

## Children's homes

The number of children in Kingston that need to be supported in a residential children's home is increasing due to the complexity of their social, emotional and behavioural needs. It is a legal requirement for all children aged under 16 who need residential care to be placed in children's homes that are registered with Ofsted and subject to regular inspection.

The only privately run provision within the borough is for children with autism and there is a general lack of provision across south-west London. Kingston children increasingly need to be placed at considerable distances from the borough boundary. They are separated from their family, friends and have to move school, causing further disruption in their lives.

We believe that this is not in the best interests of many of the children and staying in the community they are familiar with will help them rebuild their lives. Supporting children locally enables children and young people to maintain relationships with family and friends in the local area and supports continuity of schooling and relationships with relevant professionals.

## The council's responsibility

Every member and employee of the local authority has the statutory responsibility to act as a 'corporate parent' for these children. Acting in the same way that a good parent would act.

We have a moral and legal responsibility to enable the children in our care to experience happy and fulfilling lives. Every good parent wants the best for their child, to enable them to be healthy, happy, do well at school, and to enjoy good relationships with others.

Like all parents, we want our children to enjoy leisure activities, have hobbies and interests, and to grow towards adulthood equipped to lead independent and successful lives.



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