

# Foster Carer Learning & Development Brochure 2024/2025

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# Welcome and introduction from the Director of Children's Services

Welcome to the Foster Carers Learning and Development Brochure, 2024 - 2025.

Becoming a foster parent is an amazing opportunity to give a child or young person the fresh start they need. It takes a huge amount of courage to start your fostering journey, but caring for a child is one of the most rewarding things.

It is the relationship with a Carer that very often makes the real difference to the lives of our children who are looked after by the local authority. Coventry values the diligent work of its Foster Carers, therefore, is keen to support them every step of the way.

In Coventry Children's Services we place children at the heart of everything we do. We pride ourselves on being a learning organisation and are proactive in helping both employees and our foster parents to develop their skills, knowledge, and experience. We are committed to providing high quality training programmes that are accessible and relevant to all our foster carers.

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the ongoing hard work and support by the foster carers provided to our children looked after. I am delighted to announce the ongoing training and development offer to our foster carers. The Foster Care Learning and Development Brochure offers a comprehensive choice of courses, some delivered by Practitioners from the Fostering Service and other external trainers, all of whom are experts in their field.

You will note that some of many of the sessions will be delivered jointly with Supervising Social Workers, Children's Social Workers, and staff across Children's Services. This is part of the commitment to deliver a 'team around the child' approach to all looked after children and young people, relationships will be strengthened and the learning that we all take from the children we look after will be shared.

The training courses have been arranged up to March 2025 and include a mix of face to face and virtual courses and an e-learning offer to vary your development opportunities.

Please attend any courses that are beneficial to you and speak to your Supervising Social Worker regularly about any further training and development needs.

I am proud of what we are achieving in Coventry with children and families we work with, and I am committed to strengthening Children's Services further on our journey to excellence.



**Neil Macdonald**  
Director of  
Children's Services

# Training Etiquette

There are several factors that contribute to a successful training session. Trainers must be punctual, present themselves in a professional manner, and create a comfortable environment which provides an equal opportunity for all learners. Equally the behaviours demonstrated by learners will have an outcome on the quality of the session. Trainers may agree these with the group at the start of the session but here are a few basic ground rules when attending a training programme in person or virtually.



## **Always be on time:**

Arrive early so that you are ready to start on time. If running late, please email the trainer before time. Say hello to others when you join the session.



**Distractions:** Mute your microphone when not talking or contributing to the session. Use the chat box option to post any questions you may have. Have your mobile turned to vibrate or switched off. Avoid distractions while attending the session that may disrupt your learning.



## **Tools to take notes:**

Have a notebook and pen, ready to write down key concepts and to keep you physically focused on the course.



## **Environment:**

Be aware of your surroundings and ensure your set-up is favourable for learning. Always ensure the lighting is appropriate to clearly show your face. Avoid dark areas and backlight.



**Be focused:** Bring an open mind and be prepared to engage in the learning. Ask questions and give others a chance to express themselves. Be respectful to the views of others. Please attend the full session for each course.

# Training Requirements for all Foster Carers

The national minimum standards for Foster Carers require all Carers to have a Personal Development Plan and participate in on-going learning and development.

As a guideline it is expected that every Foster Carer participates in 20 hours of development activity every 12 months. This will often be through participating in the face to face and virtual learning outlined in this Learning and Development Brochure.

However, development comes in many forms and can also include reading, research, mentoring and discussions. Carers can also access training in other roles which is transferable to their work as Carers. Your Supervising Social Worker will discuss with each of you in supervision learning needs and how these will be met.

## Non-Attendance at Training Courses

Whilst we understand that you will try your best to attend the relevant training opportunities, we also understand at times there may be emergencies throughout the year when you can't attend a session that is booked. Please contact us at your earliest convenience, if you need to cancel, to enable us to offer this place to another delegate.

**Please be advised that if you are booked on to a full day training course, you are expected to stay until the end of the day.**

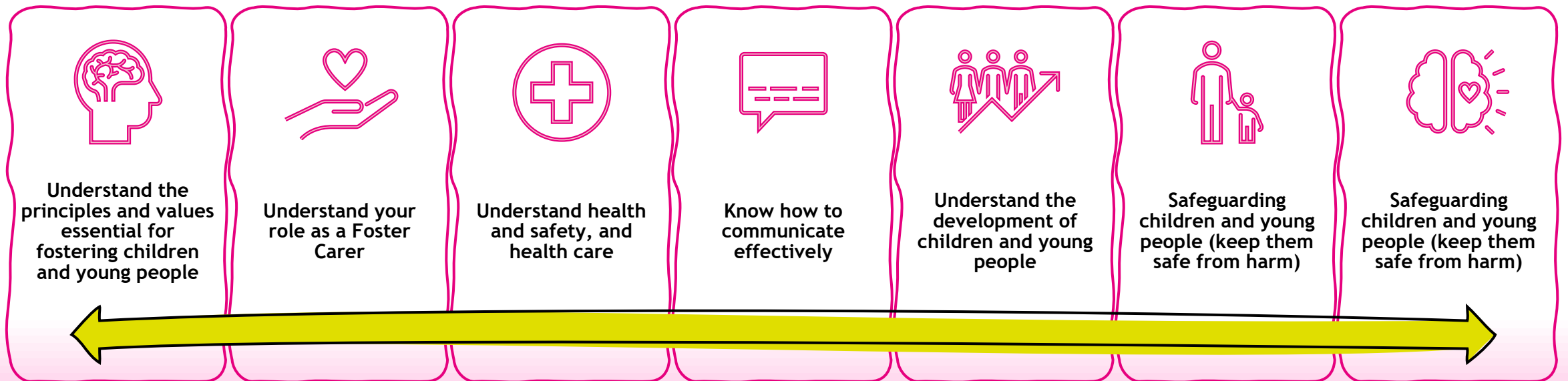


# Training, Support & Development Standards (TSD)

All Foster Carers are required to complete the Training, Support and Development Standards below within 12 months (18 months for Connected Persons Foster Carers) of becoming approved. The 7 Training, Support and Development Standards (TSD) form part of a Foster Carer's induction into the role and then become part of your Continuing Professional Development. The TSD provide a national minimum benchmark that sets out what Foster Carers should understand throughout their career. Foster Carers must evidence all of the standards under each of the following seven headings.

In Coventry we ask Foster Carers to complete a portfolio to demonstrate their understanding as they start their fostering journey. You will have received this during your assessment. Your Supervising Social Worker will support you with completing the portfolio. Attending training is one way to demonstrate your learning and can assist you with completion.

In the following pages you will find the available courses. Link to the gov.uk pages can be found [here](#).



# Course Bookings

## What training do I need?

Meet with your Supervising Social Worker/Manager and decide on your training and development needs; or refer to your Personal Development Plan in your Foster Carer Review

## Find and check courses

Check the course detail to ensure it meets your needs and there are available dates.  
**You must book on each course via the links below as courses are subject to change and at times can be cancelled due to low numbers.**

## Training Options

### Face-to-Face/ Virtual

#### Make a booking

Complete the booking online through our booking system:  
<http://coventry.council.bookingbug.com/login>

#### Virtual sessions

You should receive a link 3 days prior to the training to join a virtual session. Please contact us if you don't receive a link.

### E-Learning

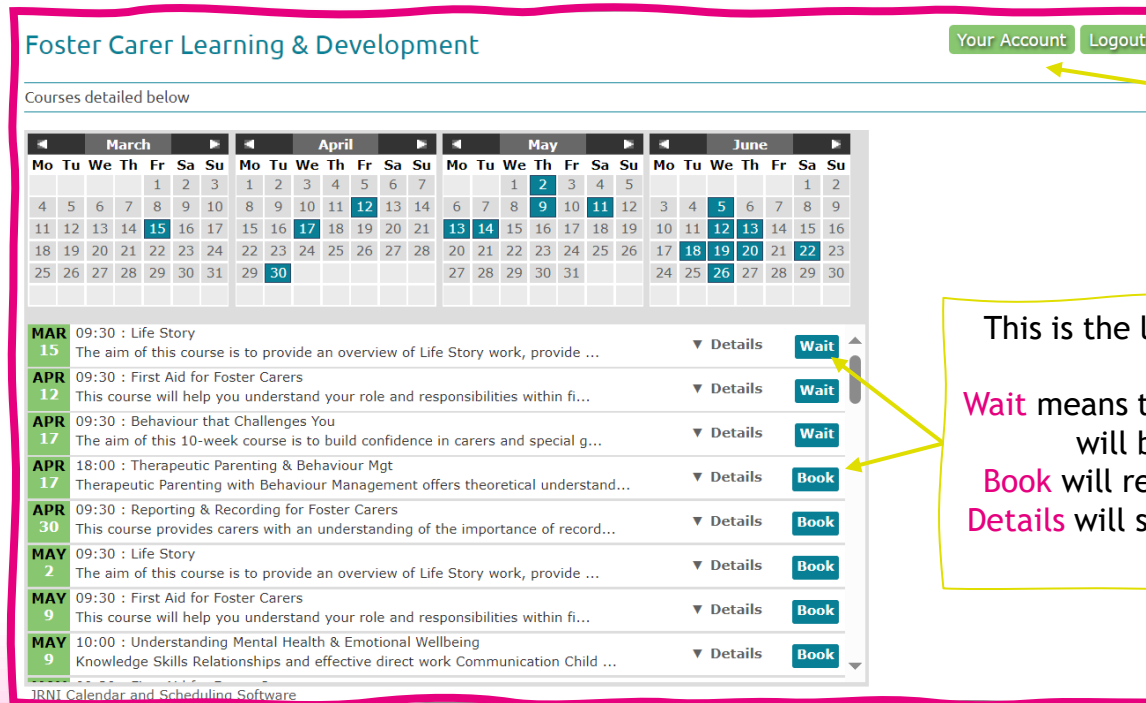
#### Access e-learning

There is an extensive selection of e-learning courses. See AC Education Course flyer.

Please contact your supervising social worker to book on a course.

# jrni Course Booking site

- JRNI is the system we have used for the past couple of years to book onto training courses.
- You will need to ask your supervising social worker to request an account be set up for you by the Children's Services Training Team.
- Link to site: <https://coventry.council.bookingbug.com/home/37043>



**Foster Carer Learning & Development** Your Account Logout

Courses detailed below

March							April							May							June						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30

- MAR 15** 09:30 : Life Story  
The aim of this course is to provide an overview of Life Story work, provide ... Details Wait
- APR 12** 09:30 : First Aid for Foster Carers  
This course will help you understand your role and responsibilities within fi... Details Wait
- APR 17** 09:30 : Behaviour that Challenges You  
The aim of this 10-week course is to build confidence in carers and special g... Details Wait
- APR 17** 18:00 : Therapeutic Parenting & Behaviour Mgt  
Therapeutic Parenting with Behaviour Management offers theoretical understand... Details Book
- APR 30** 09:30 : Reporting & Recording for Foster Carers  
This course provides carers with an understanding of the importance of record... Details Book
- MAY 2** 09:30 : Life Story  
The aim of this course is to provide an overview of Life Story work, provide ... Details Book
- MAY 9** 09:30 : First Aid for Foster Carers  
This course will help you understand your role and responsibilities within fi... Details Book
- MAY 9** 10:00 : Understanding Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing  
Knowledge Skills Relationships and effective direct work Communication Child ... Details Book

JRNI Calendar and Scheduling Software

View your account change you details on the account, view/cancel upcoming courses and view past bookings

This is the list of courses that are available for you.  
**Wait** means the course is fully booked but you will be put on the waiting list.  
**Book** will reserve your place on the course.  
**Details** will show you more information about the course.

 jrni  
[Click here to book onto courses](#)

[User Manual \(For Foster Carers\) can be found here ...](#)





## Online Learning by AC Education

The course offerings by AC Education cater to a variety of individuals including Foster Carers, Special Guardians, and other Children's Services staff.

Courses vary in length and cover topics such as **child development**, **therapeutic parenting**, **trauma**, and **attachment**.

Registrations are facilitated through Supervising Social Workers or by emailing [childrenstraining@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:childrenstraining@coventry.gov.uk).

The curriculum encompasses diverse areas including core knowledge and skills, safeguarding, therapeutic care, supporting adolescence, key foster care skills, understanding trauma impacts, working in health and social care, understanding neurodiversity and disabilities, keeping children safe online, diplomas, and additional training options. View all the courses available on their website [AC Education](#). These courses aim to equip participants with the necessary knowledge and skills to positively impact the lives of children and young people in their care. For a comprehensive overview and description of all courses, interested individuals can visit the provided links.

# Core Training

The national minimum standards for Foster Care set out the training that it is required for all Foster Carers to complete. This is what we refer to as Core Training. It is required that each Foster Carer covers the subject areas listed below either through virtual, face-to-face training or via e-learning. Some Foster Carers may have prior learning which they believe covers the subject area which they should discuss with their Supervising Social Worker.

Once the Core Training has been completed it needs to be refreshed at least every 3 years, please refer to the Foster Care Core Refresher Training on page 20 for further details.

You can find more details of each course in this Brochure. If you have any questions, please refer to your Supervising Social Worker for advice.

## **Courses Available:**

**Safeguarding Awareness for Foster Care; Intro to Safer Caring, Health & Safety; Recording for Foster Carers; Equality & Diversity; First Aid for Foster Carers; Therapeutic Parenting and Behaviour Management; Supporting Education of Looked After Children. [Continue to see more details.](#)**



# All courses available by month; April to September

April 2024

- Behaviour That Challenges You
- Reporting & Recording for Foster Carers
- Therapeutic Parenting and Behaviour Management

May 2024

- Attachment
- Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Identity
- Foster Care Core Refresher
- Life Story Work
- Understanding Mental Health & Emotional Well-being

June 2024

- Intro to Safer Caring & Health & Safety
- Safeguarding Awareness for Foster Care
- Special Guardian Training
- Supporting Education LAC (language support training)

July 2024

- Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness
- Therapeutic Parenting and Behaviour Management

September 2024

- Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Identity
- Foster Care Core Refresher
- Life Story Work
- Supporting Transition to Adoption

# All courses available by month; October to March

October 2024

- Attachment
- Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
- Foundations for Attachment
- Reporting & Recording for Foster Carers
- Special Guardian Training
- Supporting Children & YP with Autism

November 2024

- Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Identity
- Therapeutic Parenting and Behaviour Management

December 2024

- Intro to Safer Caring & Health & Safety

January 2025

- Life Story Work
- Special Guardian Training

February 2025

- Intro to Safer Caring & Health & Safety

March 2025

- Foundations for Attachment
- Safeguarding Awareness for Foster Care

# Attachment

Hosted by **Breaking The Cycle** this course will be delivered on **13<sup>th</sup> May 2024** & **8<sup>th</sup> October 2024** starting at **9:30am** and will end at **2pm**. This course is aimed towards Foster Carers & Special Guardians.

**Course Aim** is to increase your knowledge around attachment theory and how it can help support the way in which you work with children in your care. To increase the understanding of attachment theory and enable you to apply attachment theory in practice in caring for children and young people within Coventry.

**By the end of the course, you will:**

- Have an overview of attachment theory and an understanding of how attachment develops.
- Understand how experiences in early relationships can create internal working models and attachment styles and how this may affect future relationships.
- Understand the impact of separation, loss, abuse and neglect on children's development and their capacity to form attachments
- Understand the relevance of attachment theory within the role of a foster carer
- Understand how resilience theory, dyadic developmental psychology perspectives and attachment theory are linked and how this relates to using the PACE model
- Be able to make links between theory, research and practice; and understand how to apply attachment theory to the care of children and young people
- Understand how attachment theory can be used to improve child-parent/carer relationship.

# Behaviour That Challenges You

Hosted by **Sonia Elves** and **Izzy King** this course will be delivered **weekly** on a **Wednesday** for **10 weeks** from **17<sup>th</sup> April** till **26<sup>th</sup> June**. Meeting time is **9:30am** and will start with complimentary Coffee and Tea, session will **end at 12pm**.

**The aim** of this 10-week course is to build confidence in carers to understand why children and young people behave in certain ways and how to manage their responses. Carers to reflect on your own behaviours and how certain behaviours of children might trigger your own emotional responses. There will be 10 sessions split into both learning and reflective weeks. Attendance is required on all dates for 100% completion of this course

**By the end of the course participants will:**

- Embed the importance of self-care and

peer support.

- To promote permanence for children and young people.
- Embed PACE strategies into parenting the children the carers are looking after.
- Understand why children behave the way they do and how this triggers your emotions and responses.
- Explore what identity is and how this might impact behaviour.
- Develop and practice reflective skills

# Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness

Hosted by Dan Packe of Social Care Solutions, this virtual course will take place on **17th July 2024**. The session will run from **10:00 to 12:00**. This two-hour course is tailored for Foster Carers, Special Guardians, and all other staff across Children's Services.

**This course aims** to increase delegates' knowledge and awareness of CSE, as well as show them how to spot the signs of CSE. Furthermore, it will give delegates' knowledge on who to contact in such situations and how to handle it/empathise with people involved.

**By the end of the course participants will:**

- Increase awareness of Sexual exploitation and abuse of power and control in relationships.
- Increase awareness of how easy it can be to

get drawn into sexual exploitation and how hard it can be to get out.

- Gain increased knowledge of relevant and appropriate services that can offer support to young people around sexual exploitation e.g. Barnardo's.
- Enhance skills in spotting the signs of sexual exploitation.
- Enhance skills and confidence in discussing the subject of CSE.

# Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Identity

Dan Peacke of Social Care Solutions will be hosting face-to-face training sessions on the following dates: **14th May 2024, 13th September 2024 & 5th November 2024**. All sessions **start at 10am** and will **end at 2pm**. These sessions are designed for Foster Carers, Special Guardians, and all other staff across Children's Services. Each session spans a full day.

## Course Aim

"Young people in care have a deep need to know who they are, whom they belong to, to whom they are important: a set of questions whose answers lie in the concept of identity. All young people have to deal with the issue of identity and who they are becoming. However, for the youngster in care, questions of identity can be very raw indeed." (Gilligan, 2000) All too often, a child's cultural identity can be forgotten as they move through the care system. Yet we know that providing settings where cultural identity is respected, understood, and celebrated is key to successful placement outcomes.

## By the end of the course participants will:

- Explore ways to assist looked after children and young people to improve their confidence, self-worth, and self-esteem.
- Identify the fundamental importance of helping children and

young people to establish a strong sense of their own identity.

- Explore a range of perspectives which can support you in building a positive identity for a looked after child or young person.
- Develop skills in promoting and building the positive identity of children and young people.
- Gain an understanding of identity development.
- Gain an awareness of social perceptions of various identities.
- Encourage children to develop respect for themselves and for others, recognize and build on the strengths of children and young people from all cultures, abilities, and backgrounds; in ways that meet their needs and help them to achieve their full potential.



# First Aid for Foster Carers

**Mandy Beaumont** and **Julia King** from the Occupational Health & Wellbeing Service will be conducting face-to-face training sessions **on various dates, as indicated on JRNI**. These sessions are designed to last for one day and are intended for Foster Carers, Special Guardians, and Adopters.

**This course will help you** understand your role and responsibilities within first aid. It will support you to be able to assess an emergency situation safely and minimize the risk of infection to yourself and others.

**By the end of the course, participants will understand:**

- Identify the role and responsibilities of a first aider and how to minimize the risk of infection to self and others.
- Conduct a primary survey on a casualty and summon medical help.
- Demonstrate how to place an infant, child, or adult manikin into the recovery position and perform CPR.
- Demonstrate how to administer first aid to an infant, child, and young adult who is choking.
- Identify the severity of external bleeding for a casualty and demonstrate how to treat it.

- Recognize when a casualty is suffering from shock and identify how to treat it.
- Identify how to administer first aid for minor wounds, nosebleeds, and eye injuries.
- Recognize and identify how to administer first aid for a casualty with a suspected head injury.
- Recognize acute medical conditions or sudden illness and how to administer first aid.
- Identify how to recognize the severity of burns and how to administer first aid.
- Identify how to administer first aid for a casualty with suspected sudden poisoning.
- Recognize a fracture or dislocation and identify how to administer first aid.

# Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Hosted by **Joanna Buckard** from Red Balloon, this virtual training session will take place on **10th October 2024** from **09:30 to 14:00**. The course is tailored for Foster Carers and Special Guardians.

**This course aims** to support delegates to increase their knowledge and awareness of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). To define FASD, its causality, prevalence, symptoms, and impact on development, focusing especially on early childhood.

**By the end of the course, participants should be able to:**

- Identify the causes and long-term effects of FASD.
- Explain the difference between FAS (Foetal Alcohol Syndrome) and FASD.

- Identify the behaviours and needs of someone with FASD throughout their different life stages.
- Explore the possibility that some of their clients may be affected by FASD.
- Understand how to get a diagnosis.
- Assess how the clients can best be supported and identify strategies to achieve this.

# Foster Care Core Refresher

The **Fostering Service** will be conducting face-to-face training sessions on the following dates: **14th & 15th May 2024**, and **10th & 11th September 2024**. Sessions will run from **10:00 to 14:00**. These half-day sessions are designed for Foster Carers, including Connected Persons who have completed the Core Training and have fostered for at least 3 years.

**This session aims to provide** Foster Carers and Special Guardians with professional development to enhance their learning and update their skills and knowledge. The course focuses on refreshing knowledge of Safer Caring, Recording & Reporting, Behaviour Management, Safeguarding, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, and Education of Looked After Children. Please note: First Aid Training must be undertaken as a separate refresher course.

**By the end of the course, participants will:**

- Have updated knowledge and understanding of the six core training courses: Safer Caring, Recording & Reporting, Behaviour Management, Safeguarding, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, plus Education of Looked After Children.
- Provide an opportunity for those who have completed their core training program to reflect, refresh, and maintain their skills.
- Gain awareness of updates and amendments to 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013' and understand the legal and statutory

context of Safeguarding Children.

- Be aware of where and how to access related policies and procedures for safeguarding.
- Understand recording requirements of safeguarding, including information sharing & confidentiality aspects.
- Know how to care for children & young people to promote equality, respect, celebrate diversity, and include all children fully.
- Support Education - understanding educational systems and processes.

Please Note: Foster Carers and Special Guardians must have completed the separate Core Training and fostered for at least 3 years before they can attend this course as a refresher. Please seek advice from your Supervising Social Worker. Attendance on both days of this session is mandatory.

# Foundations for Attachment

Lynne Gaynor will be conducting face-to-face training sessions on the following dates:

October 10th, 17th, 24th, November 7th, 14th, and 21st, 2024.

March 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th, and April 3rd, 10th, 2025.

Each session will run from 09:30 to 14:00. This course spans six days over six weeks and is designed for Approved Foster Carers.

The aim of this course is to assist foster parents in understanding the behaviour and emotional needs of children, as well as to explore ways of building connections with them. Additionally, it aims to provide support for behaviour while fostering connections, following the 'Connection with Correction Approach' by Dan Hughes (2009). The course will also delve into the dangers of blocked care when nurturing children with blocked trust, emphasizing the importance of self-care. Furthermore, it will underscore the significance of exploring one's own attachment history when caring for children with attachment difficulties.

By the end of the course, participants will:

- Understand the challenges associated with parenting children and young people with attachment difficulties.
- Increase their skills and confidence as foster parents, fostering

emotional connections with their children.

- Consolidate Therapeutic Parenting strategies with special attention to the parenting model of DDP - PACE (Playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, and empathy).
- Explore PACE and its role in parenting, understanding why traditional behaviour management strategies may not help the child to feel secure.
- Understand the behaviour displayed by the child and how it links to their internal experience, encouraging a deeper, intersubjective relationship with the child(ren) in their care.

Please note that this is a 6-week course, and attendance on all 6 dates is required for completion.

# Intro to Safer Caring & Health & Safety

**Breaking the Cycle** will be hosting virtual training sessions on the following dates:

**5th June 2024, 3rd December 2024 & 12th February 2025**

All sessions will run from **09:00 to 14:30**. This one-day course is tailored for Foster Carers and Special Guardians.

**The aim of this program** is to increase awareness of Safer Caring and its role in safeguarding children in care, foster carers, and the family.

**By the end of the course, participants will:**

- Understand that safer caring involves assessing and managing risks.
- Identify examples of risks to children and young people.
- Show awareness of key issues in providing foster care for children and young people.
- Show awareness of the processes involved in planning safer care.

- Identify key elements of risk assessment.
- Understand how to ensure the safety of all household members.
- Enable understanding of what children and young people want and need to feel safe.
- Identify what contributes to a safe environment for children and young people.
- Identify risks to Foster Carers and their families.
- Recognize how to create a good safe care policy.
- Explain how to develop and maintain 'safer caring' guidelines for oneself.

# Life Story Work

Julia Davis will be leading face-to-face training sessions on the following dates:

2nd May 2024, 12th September 2024 & 16th January 2025

Each session will run from 09:30 to 14:00. This one-day course is designed for Foster Carers, Special Guardians, and all other staff across Children's Services.

The aim of this course is to provide an overview of Life Story work, offer an understanding of the practice issues involved in undertaking this work, and equip participants with resources and ideas to help them communicate difficult and sensitive issues effectively.

By the end of the course, participants will:

- Understand the importance of Life Story work in the life of a Looked After Child.
- Identify the challenges and issues that need to be considered in Life Story work.
- Develop skills in undertaking Life Story work and enhance competence in this area.
- Learn how to effectively collect and present information

for Life Story work.

- Create life story books that are useful, valuable, and represent the child effectively.
- Gain knowledge of how to work directly with children and young people to address themes of loss and trauma.
- Learn methods of communication to address sensitive and difficult issues in an empathic and supportive manner.
- Explore different approaches to accommodate developmental levels and additional needs in children and young people.
- Understand how to co-create narratives with children and young people.

# Reporting & Recording for Foster Carers

**Tracey Moran** and **Manaf Alderwish** will be conducting face-to-face training sessions on the following dates: **30th April 2024** & **22nd October 2024**

Both sessions will run from **09:30 to 14:30**. These half-day courses are tailored for Foster Carers and Special Guardians.

**This course provides** carers with an understanding of the importance of record-keeping and recording significant events in the lives of Looked after Children and Young People. It aims to give carers the confidence to write in a clear, concise, relevant, and meaningful way, inspiring them to focus more on providing great care and translating it into professional records.

**By the end of the course, participants will:**

- Plan their recording effectively in line with Coventry's values.
- Structure their recording in a logical,

professional, and easy-to-navigate manner.

- Write clearly, concisely, using everyday language and avoiding jargon.
- Keep their recording relevant and meaningful.
- Capture the voice of children and young people in their records.
- Reduce the time spent on writing, allowing for more time to be spent with the most important individuals - children and young people.

# Safeguarding Awareness for Foster Care

**Breaking The Cycle** will be hosting virtual training sessions on the following dates:

18th June 2024 & 12th March 2025

Both sessions will run from 09:30 to 14:00. This one-day course is designed for Foster Carers and Special Guardians.

**The aim of this course** is to provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of safeguarding principles for children who are at risk of, or have experienced, child abuse and neglect.

**By the end of the course**, participants will:

- Understand the definition of child abuse and its potential impact on children, including official definitions.
- Learn about measures to prevent child abuse.
- Develop the skills to identify signs and symptoms of possible abuse.
- Understand the factors that might affect the identification of harm, particularly when working with resistance or disguised compliance.

- Gain insight into the local context for safeguarding, including reporting procedures and the role of the Coventry Safeguarding Board.
- Recognize the importance of safeguarding procedures.
- Learn how to effectively respond to children, young people, and their carers when there is suspicion of harm.
- Understand the appropriate actions to take when there is suspicion of possible harm to a child.
- Acquire knowledge of key principles for supporting a child who has been abused.
- Understand the different pathways to recovery for children who have experienced abuse.
- Learn how to best seek help and support for oneself and colleagues.



# Special Guardian Training

Laurie Masters and Tracey Moran will be facilitating face-to-face training sessions on the following dates:  
13th June 2024, 17th October 2024 & 30th January 2024

All sessions will be held from 09:30 to 14:30. This half-day course is tailored for both Prospective Special Guardians and existing Special Guardians.

The aim of this course is to help participants understand what being a special guardian means and their role in their child's life. It aims to provide clarity about the legal responsibilities involved as a special guardian, as well as examining the impact of trauma and loss on children in relation to their previous experiences. Additionally, the course seeks to support participants in building and maintaining positive relationships and attachments with the children in their care, while considering the impact on themselves and their families. It also aims to help participants understand the support their child will gain from their education provider

and what a support plan may entail.

By the end of the session, participants will have access to information, advice, and signposting to services and support that will enable them to make informed decisions about becoming a Special Guardian and to thrive as a family.

# Supporting Children & YP with Autism

Louisa McGivney will be conducting a virtual training session on **3rd October 2024** from **10:00 to 12:00**. This one-day course is aimed at Foster Carers.

## Course Aim

This training aims to provide key autism awareness for all practitioners working with children and young people on the autism spectrum. It focuses on understanding individual children, their strengths, and differences within the context of autism. The training also emphasizes the importance of considering the four key areas of difference when working with children and young people with autism, particularly in relation to building positive relationships and developing an awareness of sensory, communication, and interaction differences.

**By the end of the course**, participants will be able to demonstrate awareness of the following:

- Raise awareness of Autism Spectrum Condition.
- Develop a shared understanding of some of the challenges that children with autism face.
- Increase confidence in providing an appropriate learning environment.
- Build a bank of strategies that can be used to support children with autism in the mainstream classroom.

# Supporting Education LAC (language support training)

The Virtual School led by **Jo Green** will be conducting training sessions on the following dates:

**12th June 2024:** Nursery, Reception & Year 1 (Face to Face) from **1:30 pm to 2:30 pm**

**19th June 2024:** KS3 and KS4 (Virtual) from **1:30 pm to 2:30 pm**

**26th June 2024:** Year 2 - Year 6 (Face to Face) from **1:30 pm to 2:30 pm**

Each session is one hour long and is designed for Foster Carers and Special Guardians.

**The aim of this course** is to emphasize the significance of communication in our daily lives, particularly for children and young people who may encounter challenges in developing their communication skills. Participants will gain a foundational understanding of the role speech, language, and communication play in the social, emotional, and academic development of children and young people. Additionally, the session will provide ideas and strategies to support the development of Speech, Language, and

Communication Needs (SLCN) at home.

## **Course Outcomes:**

1. Develop a foundational understanding of the importance of speech, language, and communication.
2. Learn about strategies that can be implemented to support speech, language, and communication needs at home.

# Supporting Transition to Adoption

**Melissa Rose** from Adoption Central England will be hosting a face-to-face training session on **25th September 2024** from **09:30 to 15:00**. This one-day course is specifically for Foster Carers.

**The aim of this course** is to equip foster carers supporting children transitioning to their adoptive families with an understanding of the theory and research behind the transition planning used by ACE (Adoption Central England) and to empower them to effectively support the children through this process.

**By the end of the course**, participants will:

- Gain knowledge about the expectations placed on foster carers when facilitating a child's transition to an adoptive placement.
- Refresh their understanding and emphasize the

importance of attachment-based transitions.

- Reflect on strategies for caring for a child, preparing them, and transferring knowledge and skills to adopters.
- Have the opportunity to consider the potential impact of the transition process on themselves and their family members.
- Engage in learning and ask questions in a relaxed environment, facilitating thoughtful consideration of raised issues and inquiries.

# Therapeutic Parenting and Behaviour Management

Julia Davis will be conducting training sessions on Therapeutic Parenting and Behaviour Management on the following dates:

17th April 2024 (Virtual), from 18:00 to 21:00

4th July 2024 (Face to Face), from 09:30 to 14:00

14th November 2024 (Face to Face), from 09:30 to 14:00

Each session is one day long and is aimed at Foster Carers and Special Guardians.

The aim of the Therapeutic Parenting with Behaviour Management course is to provide theoretical understanding and practical strategies to help carers manage the behaviour and emotions of children. The session aims to equip carers with the knowledge to create a positive, therapeutic environment for both the children and the family.

By the end of the course, participants will:

- Understand the theoretical basis for therapeutic parenting.
- Recognize the rationale for using therapeutic parenting rather than traditional models of parenting.
- Identify unhelpful approaches and explore alternatives that meet the needs of children with attachment difficulties and those who have experienced trauma and loss.
- Gain knowledge and skills needed to implement therapeutic parenting effectively.
- Learn how to address behavioral and emotional challenges presented by children and young people using therapeutic parenting principles.
- Understand the model of Blocked Care and how to prevent it.

# Understanding Mental Health & Emotional Well-being

Dr. Anita Holtom-Viesel from CAHMS-LAC will be leading a face-to-face training session on **9th May 2024** from **10:00 to 14:30**.

This one-day course is designed for Foster Carers and Special Guardians.

**The aim of this course** is to enhance participants' knowledge, skills, and relationships in the context of effective direct work and communication with children. It also focuses on understanding child development and recognizing signs of abuse and neglect.

**By the end of the day, participants will:**

- Understand the Fight, Flight, and Freeze response in the brain and its connection to developmental trauma.
- Gain insight into the teenage brain.
- Recognize how trauma manifests itself in

children.

- Differentiate between mental health and psychological distress.
- Learn when to refer to mental health services.
- Understand the timing and various types of interventions.
- Have the opportunity to ask questions related to attachment, trauma, mental health, and therapy.
- Receive an introduction to the Dimensions tool and understand its application in a social care setting.



Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and in particular protecting them from significant harm is dependent on the effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

You can access inter-agency training by clicking [here](#).



The UK Safer Internet Centre has worked together with Islington Council to create leaflets for Foster Carers, Special Guardians and Adoptive Parents. The leaflets, which are free to download and easy to print; include top tips and conversation starters to help Carers and parents get to grips with internet safety. Access the link [here](#).



Coventry Virtual School is a service provided by dedicated professionals within the Children, Schools and Families Directorate whose work is to promote and co-ordinate educational support for Looked After Children and Care Leavers to succeed at nursery, school, college and university; wherever their place of learning.

Coventry Virtual School work in partnership with schools, social workers, carers and other professionals. To ensure all are working together successfully to help children achieve their potential.

You can access Virtual School training by clicking [here](#).

# SAVE THE DATE!

**Annual Conference 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024**

**at University of Warwick**

**We are inviting all Special Guardians, Connected Persons,  
and mainstream foster carers to join us.**

For queries, please contact: [Childrenstraining@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:Childrenstraining@coventry.gov.uk)





# Trainer Profiles

### Louisa McGivney

My journey of teaching children with special educational needs began when I was a specialist teacher in an advisory capacity as part of a Local Authority Autism Outreach Service. This involved providing specialist support and guidance to schools, parents, carers, practitioners and agencies, to ensure learners were given the opportunity to access an effective, meaningful and successful education.

My current role in Coventry is as a specialist advisory teacher for the Complex Communication Team and strategic lead for all training and development in Autism across the County. I am regularly seconded as an intermediary advocate for the Criminal Justice Service; involved in court cases involving children and young adults who are on the Autism spectrum. Firmly believing that inclusion is not simply a destination, but a journey that should be as exciting and fulfilling as possible for all children, by taking account of and responding to, children's individual strengths, differences and needs.

### Dr Anita Holtom-Viesel (CAMHS LAC)

I qualified in 2011, and since qualifying I have specialised in working with children, young people, and their families. For over 10 years I have worked in the NHS in a range of mental health services, and in the last 6 years have worked in children's mental health services, specifically with children and young people with neuro-developmental conditions, such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and more recently with children in foster care and residential settings.

I also have experience of completing specialist psychological assessments and interventions with children, young people, and their families with mental health needs, and/or neurodevelopmental disorders, in children and adults. I have experience in working within a multi-disciplinary team assessing neurodevelopmental disorders,

### Dan Packe

Dan has been a valued member of the SCTS team since its foundation. He has experience in developing innovative and creative learning packages for a diverse array of clients ranging from children and their carers, in and out of home care, and family placements, to assist understanding and attachment with the aim of enabling placements to become healthy and nurturing for all involved.

Dan undertakes consultancy and training on Life Story Therapy and working with 'hard to reach' children and adolescents

He still works in treatment, which informs his practice and keeps him up-to-date with all the latest trends.

### Simon Booth - Breaking the Cycle -

Simon Booth has been working in training for over 20 years offering group intervention to adults with learning difficulties and complex young people from a range of backgrounds. He has been an active member of the Youth Offending Service for over 13 years employed as a Case Manager, Trainer and Operational Manager. He has years of hands on experience in developing and delivering programmes to young people and adults with complex needs. Simon has been an Operational Manager for 5 years, managing high risk offenders and managing the CAMHS within the criminal justice service. Simon has also been a Foster Carer and a qualified Youth Worker for many years. Simon currently trains Councils and National Organisations in courses which include: Professional Boundaries, Safeguards; Supervision and Development Assessments, Risk Management, Safeguarding, Safer Caring, Fostering Principles and Attachment, Self-harm and Suicide, Mental Health Awareness, Critical Reflection, Behavioural Management and Effective Communication, Person Centred Practice, Victim Awareness and Restorative Justice, Motivational Interviewing and solution Focused Therapy.

### William Horrocks - Tina Training

William has worked as a Health & Social Care lecturer in Further Education for over 20 years, delivering foundation and advanced in- service training in support provision, care management, counselling skills, personal development and workplace supervision.

He has a background in youth and community work, professional theatre, staff development, advocacy and group facilitation. Bill embodies a dynamic approach to personal interaction and illustrates care concepts with life stories and popular music.

### Mandy Beaumont - Occupational Health

Mandy delivers this Training for Occupational Health and runs her own First Aid Training Company - MEB Training and has been delivering First Aid Training since 2002. Mandy has also worked for local Adult Education Services delivering NPLQ and First Aid since 1998. Mandy is a Sport Centre Manager at President Kennedy School and has worked there for over 30 years. She is also a pool lifeguard trainer assessor for RLSS and has done this for over 20 years. Recently Mandy has become a mentor so now helps the probationary Trainer Assessor also. Mandy's background is with Occupational Health delivering first aid training since 2003.

### Julia Davis - Julia Davis & Associates

Julia Davis is a child and family therapist with an independent adoption agency - in this role she carries out assessments and therapy with families who have adopted, support Looked after Children and their Foster-Carers, parent mentoring, therapeutic life story work and training.

Julia is an independent social worker and play therapist - within this role she carries out assessments and therapeutic work with adopted and Looked after Children, life story work and play therapy for children with a range of issues including ill health and sexual abuse, preparing children to move to adoptive placements, assessing children as part of planning for their future needs and placements.

Julia is also an independent trainer and supervisor - she trains on direct work with families and young people, life story work, therapeutic use of play, introduction to principles of Theraplay®, developmental re-parenting, building positive attachment relationships, support to children in schools with attachment issues and many more.