

# Privacy Notice: Bristol City Council



## Privacy Notice: Fostering Service

### Who we are

Bristol City Council's Fostering service is the part of Bristol's Children's and Young People's services who works with the local authority registered foster carers and people who have said they are interested in being assessed to become one.

Bristol City Council is the data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018 and other regulations including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), which means it determines what your personal data is used for and why it is collected.

The purpose of this privacy notice is to tell you about how we collect and use personal data in connection with our service. We may update this privacy notice from time to time. When we do this, we will communicate any changes to you and publish the revised privacy notice on our website. This privacy notice should be read alongside the council's [Corporate Privacy Notice](#).

Our main address is City Hall, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5TR and our contact details can be found on [Bristol City Council's website](#).

### The data we need to collect and use

To provide this service, we will collect and use some or all the personal information below:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Address
- Phone number
- Email address
- Racial and ethnic background
- Language used
- Immigration status
- Religion
- Information that you provide about your family's needs and circumstances, including health needs and disabilities
- Information about when and where staff have met with you, what the meetings were about, and what happened at and after them
- Information that your carer or other people that know you have given us
- Information provided by other services that may be working with you, for example: health professionals, police, schools and voluntary organisations

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- Information that is relevant to an assessment of you and your family as suitable foster carers, special guardians, or adopters
- Financial information

We get most of this information from you and from what we learn about you through your use of our services, but we may also get some information about you from other services, such as health and education providers, commissioned partners, family members, your legal representative, referees, employers, regulatory bodies, police and other local authorities.

## How we use your personal information

Collecting this data is necessary to carry out our responsibilities to meet the needs of children and our foster carers. Most of the time we will ask for your consent to process your data, but there may be times when we will process this data without your consent, for example, if discussing concerns about your children with you in advance may put them at further risk of harm.

We will use this information to assess your, or your children's, needs for advice, help and support, including assessing whether children are in need of protection due to abuse or neglect. Sometimes we may need to only gather a small amount of information to meet your family's needs, but in situations where children may have been harmed, where children need to be cared for by the local authority, or you are being assessed in relation to your suitability as a foster carer or adoptive parent, we will be gathering much more information about you and your family to assess and meet your needs effectively.

Fostering regulations require that certain information about foster carers and applicants to foster must be retained on case records. As a fostering service we are required to open a case record for each approved foster carer. It includes all reports prepared for the panel as part of the fostering assessment, recommendations made by the panel, the notice of their approval, the record of the fostering agreement, reports and decisions arising out of their reviews, details and reasons for termination of approval.

## Who else we might share your personal information with

Sometimes we may need to share your information, but we will only do so where we have a valid legal basis to share data. We will only share the minimum information for each circumstance. We may share some of your personal information with one or more of the following:

- **Fostering South West** is a new regional fostering recruitment support hub for the South West. It covers all local authorities, including Bristol City Council, in the South

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West. Commissioned by the Department for Education, the new hub will work to improve the customer journey for prospective foster carers from initial enquiry through to applications. The aim is to help increase the conversion rate between initial enquiry and application.

The regional support hub will act as the first point of contact for prospective carers making an enquiry. Once processed through the hub each local authority will pick up the enquiries and ensure the prospective foster carers have the information and support they need. This time limited project is due to end in 2025 after which time responsibility for responding to initial fostering enquiries is likely to revert to Bristol City Council.

- **Academic research agencies** who are co-working on projects with the fostering service, e.g., Fostering Connections.

We may also use data processors to support our activities, for example by providing systems we need or delivering services on our behalf. These processors are:

- Fostering South West who will be using Netready to process their data.
- Academic research agencies who are co-working on projects with the fostering service.
- Controcc - the application which Bristol City Council will use to manage financial payments to foster carers from July 2024.

## Will my personal data be sent outside the UK?

No personal information is routinely sent or held outside the UK. If the transfer of personal information outside the UK becomes necessary, it will only take place if permitted by law, and then only where there are appropriate safeguards in place to protect the data.

## Legal basis for our use of your personal information

The information below shows the legal bases we are relying on to use your personal or special category (sensitive) personal information.

We are collecting this data because we are required to under the following legislation:

- Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011
- Children Act 1989
- Children and Young Person's Act 2008
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Adoption Act 2006

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- Children Act Privacy Notice Bristol City Council 2004, the Adoption and Children Act 2002
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Children and Social Work Act 2017

You can see a list of the full legal bases we may rely on by looking at our main privacy notice.

## Personal information

Our lawful basis for using your personal information is to meet our legal obligations and the delivery of social care services.

Our additional legal basis for using your special category information are substantial public interest, employment, social security and social protection, archiving, research and statistics.

## How long we will keep your personal information?

We will hold this information for as long as it is needed, or if we are required to do so by law. In practice this means that your personal information may be retained for the relevant period listed below:

- As a fostering service we have a duty to retain the case records and the entries into the Register of Foster Carers for at least 10 years from the date on which a foster carer's approval is terminated. After the relevant time period, your information will be deleted or archived.
- Records made which includes the details of applicants who withdraw their application to foster or who are not approved must be retained for at least three years. After the relevant time period, your information will be deleted or archived.
- All other data will be subject to Bristol City Council's published retention schedule at <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/files/documents/873-record-retention-schedule>

## Your rights as a data subject

The law gives you rights to control what and how personal information is used by us, including the right to access a copy of your personal information and withdraw your consent when we rely on your permission to use your personal data.

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Full details about how we use and share your data and your rights can be found on our [Corporate Privacy Notice](#). If you are unable to access our digital Privacy Notice, please [contact Citizens Services](#) whom will be able to send a hard copy.

To update or correct your information if it is inaccurate please [contact Citizens Services](#).

To access a copy of your personal information, more details, and how to make a request can be found on the [data protection subject access requests page on the council's website](#).

You can exercise any of these rights, ask questions about how we use your personal data, or complain by contacting us at [data.protection@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:data.protection@bristol.gov.uk) or by writing to our data protection officer at:

Data Protection Officer  
Information Governance  
Bristol City Council  
City Hall  
PO Box 3399  
Bristol  
BS1 9NE

If you think we have dealt with your information inappropriately or unlawfully, you have the right to complain to the ICO at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF

Website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Next annual review date: 30 April 2025

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