Holidays Abroad

There is an expectation that, provided a foster child is settled within a placement, the foster carers will include them in their holiday plans. This can include holidays abroad.

Generally speaking, foster children can be taken out of the country by their foster parents for up to 28 days, providing they have the agreement of those with parental control. Anything over 28 days needs the agreement of the court.

Carers wishing to take their foster children abroad should first discuss their plans with their SSW and the child’s social worker to ensure that there are no reasons why the trip cannot go ahead and that the children’s passports and European health cards are up to date. An application for authorisation to take the child abroad can then be made to the appropriate Service Manager, via the children’s social worker.

Authorisation

In order to get authorisation the take a child abroad, carers should provide the Local Authority with a detailed itinerary of the proposed trip. This must include dates and times of flights or ferries, types and addresses of accommodation and any other information that may help the social worker to carry out a risk assessment, if this is deemed necessary.

At this point, the carers may need to review their Family Safe Care Policy, to see if anything needs temporarily updating with regard to different sleeping arrangements on for example, a ferry or at a hotel or campsite.

Letter of Authority

Carers will need to obtain, from the child’s social work team, a letter proving to anyone in authority that they have permission to take the child out of the UK. This letter must include the names, date(s) of birth and passport number(s) of the child(ren) and carer(s) and the dates of travel. It must also state that the carer has the authority to seek emergency medical treatment for the child, if it becomes necessary. The letter should not include details of the proposed itinerary.

It should be noted that the UK Border Agency are becoming concerned about the trafficking of children into this country and the agents will ask for documentary proof from any family where there are different surnames within the group.

Sample Letter

Page 2 of this document is a sample letter, drafted by the EFCA with guidance from the Legal Department of the Fostering Network. Carers can use this template to construct their own letter, for printing and signature on ECC headed paper.
To whom it may concern

This is to confirm that:

**Foster Child 1**, d.o.b. xx/xx/xxxx, passport number xxxxxxxxx,

**Foster Child 2**, dob xx/xx/xxxx, passport number xxxxxxxxxx, and

**Foster Child 3**, dob xx/xx/xxxx, passport number xxxxxxxxx

were made the subjects of a Care Order (copy attached), under S31 of the Children Act 1989, on

xx\(^{th}\) Xxxxxxx 20XX.

Essex County Council, as the Authority with responsibility for the children, authorises

**Foster Carer 1**, dob xx/xx/xxxx, British passport number xxxxxxxxxx and

**Foster Carer 2** dobxx/xx/xxxx, British passport number xxxxxxxxxx, who are Foster Carers for the

above named children to take them to Country?, on holiday, from Xxxday xx\(^{rd}\) Xxxxx 20XX until

Xxxday xx\(^{rd}\) Xxxxx 20XX

Essex County Council also authorizes **Carer 1** and **Carer 2** to take whatever measures are

necessary to ensure the wellbeing of the above named children during this period, including the

sourcing and authorisation of emergency medical and dental treatment.

Signed on behalf of Essex County Council

Service Manager