



**Tree House Care**  
doing the right thing for our children

## PRIVACY NOTICE

### Fostering

May 2018, Updated August 2022

#### **Privacy Notice Fostering**

At Treehouse Care Fostering Solutions Ltd we process personal data relating to those who enquiry, apply, and are approved to become foster carers. We do this, so we can provide a good quality service to our carers and have the necessary information on file as required by the Fostering Regulations (2011).

#### **Organisation Information**

**Data Controller:** This is the organisation

Treehouse Care Fostering Solutions Ltd  
The Old Vicarage  
17 Heneage Road  
Grimsby  
North East Lincolnshire  
DN32 9DZ  
01472 598334

**Data Processers:** this is anyone who processes information for Tree House Care, which includes, but is not limited to, supervising link workers, business support, and finance.

**Data Protection Officer:** Hugh Mellett, Director of Operations  
Treehouse Care Fostering Solutions Ltd  
The Old Vicarage  
17 Heneage Road  
Grimsby  
North East Lincolnshire  
DN32 9DZ  
01472 598334  
[hugh.mellett@treehousecare.org](mailto:hugh.mellett@treehousecare.org)

Treehouse Care Fostering Solutions Ltd are registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO):

Information Commissioner  
Wycliffe House  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
01625 545700  
[mail@dataprotection.gov.uk](mailto:mail@dataprotection.gov.uk)  
[www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

### **What personal data do we hold?**

If you enquire to foster but do not proceed any further, we only keep limited information; the basic details you have completed on your enquiry and/or application form.

If you are assessed and approved as a foster carer the information, we keep is much more detailed.

The personal data we process may include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- data relating to your identity (including name, data of birth, gender, photographs, passport, National Insurance Number, ethnicity, marital status, dependants),
- contact details (home address, telephone numbers, email addresses, emergency contact details),
- current and previous employment details,
- background information (life history, previous experience, qualifications and certifications, criminal records check),
- financial information (bank details, income, outgoing),
- IT information – information related to your access to our systems (login details, IP addresses, log files, access/times/duration of use, location),
- Diary recordings (any interaction and correspondence between carers and Tree House Care).

The above includes **special category information** (sensitive data such as ethnicity and marital status).

Whilst the majority of personal information you provide to us is mandatory through statutory compliance with legislation, some of it is provided to us on a voluntary basis. If you do not provide the information required, we may not be able to approve you as a foster carer.

We have a consent form for you to complete, separate to this document, to state whether you give us permission to have, store, and share your data as per the subheadings below.

### **How do we store your personal data?**

Your personal data will be stored securely and confidentially on both electronic and paper records.

Our electronic database system, CHARMS, is held externally by Social Care Network Ltd, with whom we have a contract agreement, and are compliant with the requirements of data protection legislation.

Our paper records are held at our Head Office, securely locked in the allocated filing room.

### **How long do we retain your personal data for?**

We retain this information as per the Fostering Regulations (2011) requirements.

For those who enquire to foster or apply but are not approved this information *‘must be retained for at least 3 years from the refusal or withdrawal, as the case may be, of the application to become a foster parent.’*

Approved foster carers records *‘must be retained for at least 10 years from the date on which their approval is terminated.’*

### **Information sharing**

Your personal data may be shared with other agencies where there is a legitimate reason, or you have provided permission such as:

- local authorities for matching or information when a child is placed;
- other fostering services and Ofsted for inspection purposes;
- Other agencies in relation to safeguarding children.

### **Your Rights**

You have a right to see the data we hold on you. You can make a request to see this information either written or verbally. Once you have made this request, we have one month to comply (this can be extended to two months if there is complex information).

You have the right to be forgotten, which mean you can request for us to erase the data we hold on you. Information may not be erased if we have a specific reason to keep this, which includes Safeguarding and Fostering Regulations, as we have a legal duty to retain your records for the length of time stated above.

If you believe we have made a mistake, and want your data amended you can contact us and if necessary, we will rectify this at the earliest date. This includes records of visits and communication, though remember that other people may recall events differently, therefore we will ensure that our records reflect all parties’ recollections.

## **Complaints and how to exercise your rights**

You can contact our Data Protection Officer if you wish to make a complaint. This is Hugh Mellett, Director of Operations. His details can be found at the beginning of this document.

You can also contact the Information Commission's Office (ICO) if you are unhappy about the way we are processing your information. Their details can be found at the beginning of this document. **Privacy Notice Fostering – Children**

Treehouse Care Fostering Solutions Ltd follows the Fostering Regulations (2011), the law which tells us what we need to do to make sure you are safe and cared for by good foster carers. The regulations tell us to keep your information so that we can make sure this happens.

### **What information?**

Tree House Care keeps records about all the children who are cared for by our foster carers.

This includes your:

- Name
- Age
- Address
- Health
- Education
- Religion
- Ethnicity
- Life story
- Any diary logs and recordings by your carers, social worker, and Tree House Care Supervising Link Worker.

We may have more information if we need it.

This is called Personal Data.

Some of the information is very sensitive, for example your religion. This is called Special Category Data.

We need to keep your information safe. This is called Data protection.

## Who's Who?

Treehouse Care Fostering Solutions Ltd controls what happens to your information, so we are the Data Controller.

Our address and telephone number are:

Treehouse Care Fostering Solutions Ltd  
The Old Vicarage  
17 Heneage Road  
Grimsby  
North East Lincolnshire  
DN32 9DZ  
01472 598334

Anyone who write diary records, or adds information to you record and file, is called a Data Processor. This includes your foster carers, and supervising link workers.

Hugh Mellett is our Data Protection Officer. He makes sure that we are doing what we should be doing to keep your information safe.

You can contact him at:

Treehouse Care Fostering Solutions Ltd  
The Old Vicarage  
17 Heneage Road  
Grimsby  
North East Lincolnshire  
DN32 9DZ  
01472 598334  
[hugh.mellett@treehousecare.org](mailto:hugh.mellett@treehousecare.org)

Treehouse Care Fostering Solutions Ltd are registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). They provide us with information, guidance, and advice on how to keep information safe and secure:

Information Commissioner  
Wycliffe House  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
01625 545700  
[mail@dataprotection.gov.uk](mailto:mail@dataprotection.gov.uk)  
[www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

## Where do we keep your information?

We have an electronic system called CHARMS, which keeps all your information. Your foster carers can also access this so they can keep diary records about what happens daily.

This system is confidential, very safe and secure. A company called Social Care Network manage CHARMS to make sure it is safe. We have a contract with them to make sure this information we keep is confidential.

Your foster carers are given paperwork with your information from your social worker. Some of this they keep on CHARMS. Some they keep in a paper file which they keep locked and secure so no one else can access this.

### **How long do we keep your information?**

The law, Child Care Planning Placement and Review Regulations (2010), says we have to keep children's information until that child turns 75, or 15 years after the child under the age of 18 dies.

When a child moves from a foster carer all the paperwork that your social worker gave them is given back.

### **Who do we share your information with?**

We give your information to foster carers so we can ensure they are the right carers for you and can keep you safe.

We work with other agencies who may need your information, including Ofsted, or health professionals. We will only do this if we have to because of the law, or if you have given us your permission, also called consent.

### **What are your rights?**

You have the right to see the information we have about you. You can ask for this in writing (letter or email), or verbally (by telephone or on a visit). We have to give you this within a month.

If you want us to delete information on your file you can ask for this to be done. We can't always delete everything, because of what the law says, and we might need to keep some information to keep you safe and look after you properly.

If you think we have some of your information wrong, you need to tell us, and we will check this and decide if this needs to be changed. There will be times we cannot change this, but we will record what you have said on your file.

If you want to contact us about your rights you can contact Hugh Mellett, our Data Protection Officer. His details are above.

### **How can you make a complaint?**

You can contact Hugh Mellett, the Data Protection Officer if you are not happy and want to make a complaint. His details are above.

You can also contact the Information Commission's Office (ICO) if you are unhappy. Their details are above.