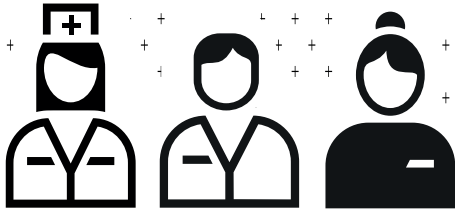




DECEMBER 2018



FOSTER CARERS

Reflections on 2018: Another year of foster carer collective achievements

This year has proven to be just as eventful as last year in the advancement of rights and recognition for foster carers.

The year was off to a flying start as GMB welcomed the report by the Education Select Committee Inquiry into Fostering. The report called for a fundamental review of the whole care system. The committee backed GMB's recommendations that considerations needed to be given as to whether 'self-employed' is the correct employment status for foster carers; to review tax rules; and boost minimum allowances. Importantly also, the committee called for a national college for foster carers to help deliver national training and development. This would be key in advancing the professional recognition that foster carers deserve.

However, disappointments were running high when not long afterwards, the National Fostering Stocktake report was published. Support for GMB's calls for a national register of foster carers was supported but everything else was lacking – including the call for proper pay and allowances being refused, as well as no recognition of foster carers being professionals.

It took six months for the government to publish their report 'Fostering Better Outcomes' following on from both the Inquiry and Stocktake. Once again, the report was a huge disappointment. Some key GMB recommendations were honoured such as better support for foster parents, including access to peer support and respite, and better delegated authority. But many fundamental issues were not addressed. No changes to tax and benefits; a requirement to adhere to national minimum allowances only, which only increased by 1.5% this year – way below inflation and cost of living increases; no change to employment status; no to professional recognition; no reference to a national register or standards; and no extra funding for local authorities to invest in fostering.

GMB will continue to campaign for the government to implement all of our recommendations made into the Inquiry and Stocktake.

There were some successes and real advancements in 2018. Our campaign to extend 30 hours free childcare to foster carers of 3-4 year olds became effective in September and our foster carers are already starting to see the benefits of this.

GMB also pushed for Child Bereavement Leave to be extended to include foster carers, who were previously denied this. It is hoped the new legislation will become effective in 2020.

JOIN ONLINE: WWW.GMB.ORG.UK/JOIN



“LET’S STICK TOGETHER AND RETAIN OUR HARD FOUGHT TERMS AND CONDITIONS”

There have also been many local successes, as more foster carers joined the GMB and stood together collectively to challenge cuts to terms and pay. More local agreements are being reached to recognise GMB as the trade union for foster carers, including securing fostering friendly policies.

We end the year with the launch of our **Allegations Survey**. The data collected will be key in pushing our campaigning next year. We urge all foster carers to have their say and complete the survey at:- <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/gmb-foster-carers>

Looking forwards to 2019

2019 will see more campaigns for foster carers – so that we can continue to see the developments for foster carers and the children they care for.

As a member led trade union, we rely on our foster carer members to set our campaigning agenda and stand together in our fight. So, we need you! We already have a number of GMB foster carers activists in many of our nine regions – but we need more.

Would you be interested in being a GMB representative or contact point for foster carers in your area? If so, email your contact details to:

Rachel Harrison - GMB Public Services National Officer (Foster Carers)
Rachel.harrison@gmb.org.uk

Facebook: GMB – The Union for Foster Carers

Twitter: @RHarrisonGMB

Foster carers join the GMB for only £7.96 per month.

Not a GMB member?

Know a foster carer who isn't a GMB member?

Join today and ask other foster carers to join too – www.gmb.org.uk/join



**GMB WOULD LIKE TO WISH ALL OF OUR FOSTERING FAMILIES
A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

JOIN ONLINE: WWW.GMB.ORG.UK/JOIN

Join now for protection, support and advice.

Hand this form to your local GMB representative, or post it by simply writing 'Freepost GMB' on an envelope. You don't need a stamp or any other address details. Questions? Email us at info@gmb.org.uk or visit our website: www.gmb.org.uk where you can also join instantly.



PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS

SIGN WHERE YOU SEE THE **X**s

TELL US ABOUT YOU. This will help us do the best possible job for you.

Forename <input type="text"/>	Home address <input type="text"/>	Work address <input type="text"/>
Surname <input type="text"/>	Postcode <input type="text"/>	Postcode <input type="text"/>
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THE IMPORTANT BITS. Please authorise the Direct Debit.

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	Please fill in the form and send back to 'FREEPOST GMB'	Service User Number						
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PAYMENT DATE. Please select a payment date.

This is not part of the instruction to your bank or building society.

If you are paid monthly 1st* 8th* 16th* 23rd* Last day of the month* OR if you are paid 4 weekly 1st Friday 2nd Friday 3rd Friday 4th Friday
* or next working day

STAYING IN TOUCH. We want to make it as easy as possible to talk to each other.

GMB contacts members by email, phone and SMS about issues related to membership, membership services and campaigns.

Tick if you **DO NOT** wish to be contacted by: Email Phone SMS

GMB has a political fund to pay for political campaigning, which you can opt-in to for **1p a week**. In the past, the fund has helped win rights such as the minimum wage and maternity leave. There will be no detriment to you if you do not opt-in.

Do you want to opt-in to the political fund? YES NO

AND JOIN. I agree to abide by GMB rules.

Signed **X** Date

Welcome to the GMB Union family!

To read the GMB rulebook please visit www.gmb.org.uk/rules For our privacy policy go to www.gmb.org.uk/your-privacy

You can change your contact preferences at any time by logging into your MyGMB area at www.gmb.org.uk/mygmb

FOR GMB USE ONLY

Section Branch number Membership number Join date