Grace Eyre Shared Lives: 3b

Guidance Notes
Welcome to Grace Eyre

Grace Eyre takes its name from Grace Eyre Woodhead, who founded our organisation in 1898. The organisation started by placing children with learning disabilities from London hospitals in holiday homes in East Sussex. Once agreed that children could be placed permanently within families, there evolved the need for regulated placements. In line with government legislation of the day, the 'Guardianship Society' was formed in 1913. This model of Social Care was the first formation of what we now know as Shared Lives. In 1950 the 'Guardianship Society' moved to its present premises in Hove and in 1988 the 'Guardianship Society' changed its name to The Grace Eyre Foundation. Grace Eyre Woodhead created the whole concept of Shared Lives and this model of care has been replicated across the country and internationally.

In present day, Grace Eyre is a dynamic, person centred organisation offering a diverse range of services. We are an approved provider for four key services:

- Shared Lives - supported living through professional family carers
- Active Lives - learning and leisure day activities
- Choices - supported living in people’s homes and community support
- Grace Eyre Housing - (supporting people to find their own homes and manage their tenancies).

We hold contracts with 24 Local Authorities for our services.
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These guidance notes have been written to help you to complete our application form to become a Shared Lives Carer. The more information you are able to share with us, the better we will be able to see whether we can support your application and give you a speedy response. It is also useful to read the supporting information with this pack that tells you more about being a Shared Lives Carer. Thank you for taking the time to get information about us and fill in this form.

SECTION 1: YOUR DETAILS

Please fill in all the boxes.

You can apply as a single applicant in which case you would just complete the application form. If you are applying as a couple, or as partners who would like to work together as joint shared lives carers, then **both** of you will need to complete an application form. Please provide the name of your partner applicant on your application form.

If you are part of a couple or partners and one of you is intending to take the main role of Shared Lives Carer, then we will only need the primary applicant’s details. If your application is taken forward, we will discuss Support Carer applications at a later date.

**Previous addresses:**

If you have had more than one previous address in the last five years, then please continue on a separate sheet.

**How did you hear about Grace Eyre Shared Lives?**

It is helpful to us to find out how applicants know about us. We can use this to look at how to get accessible information about the scheme to more people in the community.

SECTION 2: DETAILS OF PREVIOUS CARER REGISTRATIONS

We need to know if you have ever been registered as a care provider in any other sort of scheme before. This enables us to do some checks and references. It also gives us an indication of the sort of experience you might have which would support your application.

SECTION 3: OTHER MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD

When considering someone as a Shared Lives Carer, we need to gain a good understanding of who is in their household and check how they might feel about sharing their home with a service user. Knowing the make-up of your family helps us to gain a clearer understanding of what sort of matching choices we would be able to make. For example, families with young children might offer a different type of placement to a household with just one person in it.
Please also tell us about any domestic pets within your household as people have different views about animals.

If any of your current household members are service users for whom you already provide a service and for which you are paid, we will need to explore this further. This could be a foster child approaching 18 years of age, someone living with you under a local authority arrangement, or someone living with you paying privately for a care service from you.

SECTION 4: TELL US ABOUT YOUR HOME

Shared Lives Carers can support a maximum of three people at any one time in their home. Each service user (unless already in a relationship as a couple) must have their own bedroom which is in the main part of the house, not a separate annexe. Please let us know how much accommodation you have available.

It helps to know a little about your home so we can think about whether it would be suitable for a Shared Lives placement. We need to check that there is reasonable space for everyone to live in together and that your home offers an acceptable level of comfort and amenities. If you have downstairs accessible accommodation available, please make that clear in the description of your home.

It would also be helpful if you can tell us a little about the community you live in – whether it’s a busy area or a quiet road, whether you are near shops, or in a more remote area. It will also be helpful to know what the transport links near your home are. Please be aware that we look at all of these factors during the assessment process.

If your house is designed in a way that makes it unsuitable for wheelchair users or people with walking difficulties, please let us know. This may include steep steps, a house on many levels, or a house that is on a hill.

SECTION 5: WHAT SERVICES ARE YOU INTERESTED IN PROVIDING?

Please tick all the boxes that apply as this really helps us to understand what you are interested in doing and how that relates to our current priorities. It is more helpful if you can be specific at this point rather than ticking all the boxes, but again we will look at this with you should your application be taken further.

SECTION 6: PERSONAL STATEMENT

This is a really important part of the form! This is where you can let us know about you in your own words. This will assist us when we look at matching people and will let us know about your skills and challenges.
The key things to address in this section of the form are why you wish to become a Shared Lives Carer. It would be useful if you include an outline of any specific caring skills or experience you have and how you gained this experience. We would also like to gain some insight about your lifestyle and the sort of family life a service user would be entering into if they came to live with you. Please do continue on a separate sheet if necessary. The more you can tell us, the more we can get a picture of your suitability for the role of a Shared Lives Carer.

SECTION 7: CURRENT AND PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT

We are required to gather a complete employment history of each applicant.

Please include all job/occupation roles, even if you were self-employed as we need a continuous employment history without any gaps for the last five years. If you were not formally working but were raising your family or caring for a relative, then please note that in this section.

SECTION 8: TRAINING & QUALIFICATIONS

If you have relevant training or qualifications please let us know. This might have been gained through your employment or in your own time. The sort of things that are relevant are NVQs in care, social work or health qualifications, first aid qualifications (if within the last 3 years) and any other training relevant to caring for vulnerable adults.

SECTION 9: REFERENCES

Each applicant must provide a medical reference, an employer’s reference (where applicable) and three personal references. We do not take up the references until we have discussed your application with you.

Medical reference: We need your permission and doctor’s details to seek a medical reference from your GP. We ask them to tell us whether they feel there is any medical or health reason why you would be unsuitable to become a Shared Lives Carer. Your GP may charge you for this reference. If the GP indicates a concern, we would then discuss this with you further and it would not necessarily preclude you from becoming a Shared Lives Carer.

Employer’s reference: This should be an appropriate person within your current employer’s organisation. If you are not currently employed or are self-employed, please indicate this on the form. It may be appropriate to ask for a reference from your last employer, depending on how long ago you worked there.

Personal references: We will need three personal references which give us an informed opinion about your character, personality, integrity and commentary on your caring abilities.
Personal referees should not be a relative or neighbour unless there is a specific relevance (e.g. your experience as an informal carer for a family member). Only one reference can be from a family member or neighbour in these circumstances.

Preferably referees should have known you for a minimum of 5 years to give a good history of your skills and experience.

Each applicant must give different personal referees. Please ensure your referees know you have given their name. Please also ensure you provide full address details for your references so that they can be contacted swiftly.

SECTION 10: DECLARATIONS AND CONSENTS

We cannot process your application unless this section has been completed in full. We need to know if there are any issues that might come up on a DBS – Disclosure & Barring Services (formerly CRB) - check or on a check of the Protection of Vulnerable Adults List (POVA). Certain offences and being on the POVA list automatically exclude someone from becoming a Shared Lives Carer, but there can be some discretion about some minor offences. We would need to discuss this with your further.

The consent section gives us permission to take up the necessary references and checks when required. This includes those we have already stated plus a mortgage/landlord check to ensure that the accommodation you are offering could be used for this purpose. We also have to consult the local authority and check to see if you are known to them for any reason.

The consent section also gives us permission to keep your details on paper and electronically. We follow all the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and take the utmost care with your personal information.

We also have to get your permission to make your information available to the CQC, our registering body, on request.

11. WHERE TO SEND YOUR APPLICATION FORM

There are 3 ways to submit your application. If using the online website facility, once the form is fully completed, you should press the submit button. If you complete the Word document version you can email your application. If you print out a hard copy of a completed form or you hand write your application, you can post it. Please use the relevant contact details below:
1. To email application forms:

For Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster Shared Lives applications: sharedlives3b@grace-eyre.org

For Brighton & Hove and West Sussex applications: sharedlives@grace-eyre.org

2. To submit applications by post:

For applications in Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster please send the completed form by post to: Shared Lives Manager, Grace Eyre, Age UK, 3rd Floor, WeAre336, 336 Brixton Road, London, SW9 7AA.

For applications in Brighton & Hove and West Sussex please send the completed form by post to: Shared Lives Manager, Grace Eyre, 36 Montefiore Road, Hove, BN3 6EP

However you submit your application, we would advise you to keep a copy. When we receive it we will acknowledge it and let you know what happens next.

SECTION 12: FEEDBACK

Whether you apply online through the Shared Lives website or you email/post your application we would like your feedback. We are trying to make the application process as easy as possible. Your feedback on the process is really valuable and we would very much appreciate any feedback you have to offer.

SUBMIT – if applying through our website - please don't forget to press the SUBMIT button. You will receive a message to say your application has been acknowledged.

To contact our Shared Lives service for Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, and Westminster,

Call: 0207 924 0631 or 07590 600730