

Bronwen's diary

Baby usually wakes first around 7-7.30, so a peaceful time when he has his bottle and I can enjoy my first cup of coffee, the 2 year old usually hears us and gets up to join us on the settee with her drink of milk.

My first job is to change both nappies then get breakfast ready.

After breakfast, it's time to get dressed for the day.

Three days a week I get them both ready for contact with their birth parents. This includes a bag with spare nappies and clothes, lunch and drinks.

While they attend contact I have a few free hours to walk the dogs, tidy the house and some peaceful shopping. After collecting the children we don't get home until around 2pm, the children are often very tired and upset after contact so we have a quiet afternoon playing at home with toys, playdough or baking (and eating while we bake).

Twice a week the little girl goes to playgroup, giving her the opportunity to mix with children her own age. The baby and I then come home and after his morning nap we have some valuable 1-1 play without the 'help' of a 2 year old. After collecting from playgroup we have lunch then depending on the weather we take the dogs to the local park where the dogs have a good run and the children play on the swings and slide.

If the weather is too wet or cold we go to a soft play area. Occasionally we meet up with other foster carers and the children can play together while we have a well deserved coffee. If my daughter is available we sometimes go swimming which both children thoroughly enjoy.

Team time is a good time for chatting about our day and deciding what to do the next day. We also chose what bedtime story we are going to have later.

After tea its bath time, clean nappies and pyjamas on. Then they watch Cbeebies while I make the bottles and get the story book out. I read them the story while they both have a bottle of milk then it's time for bed. Both go at the same time and settle quickly and are asleep within minutes.

It's my time then to tidy up and write in the daily diary. Each child has a separate diary that I record what they have done that day and whether there were any significant changes to behaviour or any problems.

During the day I may have had a call from the social worker arranging a visit or the health visitor wanting to make an appointment to check the children's development and I need to record these in my personal diary.

While doing all this I find myself reflecting on the changes and improvements that the children have made since coming to live with me. Also the privilege I have had of seeing their milestones such as first tooth, first step, new words etc.

I then think back to all the other children I have fostered and the difference that I have made to the lives, be it only a small difference at times, and hope that they are all doing well wherever they are.

I am then able to sit down to watch television and carry on with knitting a blanket for a doll that Father Christmas brought and have some well deserved 'me' time.