



Our ref: 82934462
16 April 2026



I can confirm that the information requested is held by Birmingham Childrens Trust. I have detailed below the information that is being released to you.

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding your local authority's policy on children in care travelling abroad.

Please could you provide the following information:

1) Does your authority permit children in foster care to travel abroad on a non-UK passport?

No BCT policy or guidance located in the public domain prohibits children in care from travelling on a nonUK passport.

BCT's Policies & Procedures Manual covers Children in Care and Foster Care but does not contain any blanket restriction based on nationality or passport type.

This aligns with national statutory guidance (e.g., Care Planning Regulations), under which children may hold passports of their country of origin, especially where they have dual nationality.

2) Do you require children in care to hold a British passport in order to travel internationally?

There is no published requirement in any BCT-accessible procedures or Foster Carer Handbook materials that children must hold a British passport to travel.

The Foster Carers Handbook (online version) outlines day-to-day fostering requirements but does not impose any nationality-based passport restrictions.

Therefore, permission decisions are based on:

- Parental responsibility
- Legal requirements of the destination country
- The child's care plan

- Risk and safeguarding considerations

3) What safeguards or assessments are required before granting permission for a child in care to travel abroad?

Travel abroad requires consent from everyone with parental responsibility unless a court order transfers this decision-making power. Parental permission is required for any child being taken out of the country, and if the child is under an Interim or Full Care Order, consent must also be obtained from the Head of Service.

In line with statutory expectations, the following are typically required for travel abroad:

- Valid passport (regardless of nationality)
- Visa (if required for destination)
- Written parental consent (if parents hold PR)
- Social worker and delegated manager approval

This is consistent with national requirements found in external statutory guidance on minors travelling (e.g., UK and international travel requirements).

Before any booking is made, foster carers must consult:

- The child's social worker
- The supervising social worker
- The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)
- The designated decision-maker within the local authority

School / Virtual school must agree alongside the HOS for a child or YP to travel in term time and this must be for an important or special event.

A risk assessment is completed for any travel where a child's health or safety could be compromised e.g. Visiting a country with heightened security concerns; child has complex medical needs; travel involves significant safeguarding considerations

Foster carers and professionals must check the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) travel advice before travel.

Passport applications require consent from the Director of Children's Services (or delegated senior manager) and all documentation / correspondence is handled by BCT.

4) Are decisions made on a case-by-case basis, or is there any blanket policy restricting travel based on nationality or passport type? If restrictions exist, please provide the written policy or guidance governing these decisions.

Case-by-case

BCT decisions are made individually, based on:

- Care Plan
- Delegated authority
- Safeguarding considerations
- Parental responsibility
- Child's best interests

There is no blanket policy restricting travel based on:

- Nationality
- Type of passport held
- Immigration status

5) If possible, I would appreciate copies of any relevant policies, guidance documents, or foster carer handbook sections.

No travel restrictions exist.

Please quote the reference number **82934462** in any future communications.

If you are dissatisfied with our response to your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within 40 working days from the date this authority issued its initial response. Please outline which part of the response you are not happy with setting out your reasons. This request should be addressed to:

Corporate Information Governance Team
PO Box 16366
Birmingham
B2 2YY
Email: infogovernance@birmingham.gov.uk

If you are still dissatisfied with the Birmingham Childrens Trust's response after the internal review you have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office

Website: www.ico.org.uk

I will now close your request as of this date.

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Disclosure Officer

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