



Islamic Guidance on Adoption and Fostering

Practical **Guidance** for
Caring through
Adoption and Fostering



Caring for
Vulnerable
Children



Adoption,
Fostering &
Identity



Faith, Family
& Cultural
Respect



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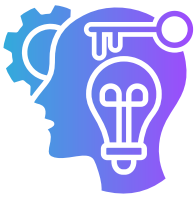


Introduction

Many children in the UK need safe, loving homes. Some come from difficult situations or have no family able to care for them. Islam places strong emphasis on caring for vulnerable children.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

"I and the one who cares for an orphan will be together in Paradise like this." (Bukhari)



Key takeaway: Caring for vulnerable children is a moral and spiritual duty in Islam.





Caring for Vulnerable Children

Islam strongly encourages supporting children who do not have safe parental care. This includes:

- Children whose parents are alive but unable to care for them.
- Children in state care.
- Children who fall outside the classical definition of *yateem* (orphan)

Islamic scholars recognise that vulnerable children today may have complex family circumstances..



Key takeaway: Caring for vulnerable children is a moral and spiritual duty in Islam.





Adoption and Fostering – What They Mean

UK adoption:

- Transfers parental responsibility permanently.
- Legally makes the child part of the adoptive family.

Islamic guidance:

- Caring for a child is allowed and encouraged.
- **Erasing or hiding lineage (nasab) is not permitted.**
- The child's identity must be preserved.

These two positions can work together when carers ensure the child's background is respected and recorded.



Key takeaway: Care is encouraged, but Islamic teaching requires preserving lineage and identity.



Keeping the Child's Identity Safe

Preserving a child's lineage and family name is an Islamic principle.

Qur'an 33:4–5 teaches that children should be called by their true parentage wherever possible.

If a name needs to change for safety or legal reasons, the child should later be told their background at an appropriate time.



Key takeaway: Protecting lineage is part of ethical and Islamically sound care.





Family Relationships and Privacy

At puberty, Islamic rules on privacy, modesty, and relationships apply. This includes:

- **Mahram considerations**
- **Separate** sleeping arrangements
- **Clear household boundaries** around **privacy**

These matters are manageable with practical steps such as:

- Separate bedrooms
- Clear routines
- Respectful boundaries for everyone in the home



Key takeaway: Privacy needs can be met with simple, practical solutions.



Parent–Child Bonding (Wet-Nursing)

For very young children, some carers may consider wet-nursing, which:

- Creates a mahram relationship (milk-kinship or raḍāʿ a)
- Affects marriage eligibility and family rules
- Must be voluntary, ethical, and medically supported
- Only applies under the age of 2



Key takeaway: Wet-nursing can support bonding but must be carefully and safely considered.





Caring for Children of Different Faiths

Carers should support children regardless of religion.

Qur'an 2:256 states: *"There is no compulsion in religion."*

This means children should not be pressured to change their faith.

Good care includes:

- Supporting a child's existing religious identity
- Allowing them to practise their own traditions
- Respecting their cultural background



Key takeaway: Children should be supported to maintain their own faith and culture.





Muslim Children in Non-Muslim Homes

Where possible, children should be placed in homes that support their identity.

However, when this is not possible:

- Carers can still meet a Muslim child's needs with the right support
- Local authorities should provide guidance on culture, diet, faith, and routines



Key takeaway: Identity matters, and carers can be supported to meet these needs.





Recommendations

- Consider becoming a foster carer or adopter.
- Learn about the needs of Muslim children in your local authority.
- Support initiatives aimed at increasing Muslim foster carer recruitment.
- Provide community support to carers and children in care.
- Encourage community leaders to talk openly about fostering and adoption.





Conclusion

Islam supports caring for vulnerable children. Many barriers come from misunderstandings or lack of information.

This guide reflects the views of contemporary scholars and practitioners working within the UK legal system.

With the right support, adoption and fostering can be a positive, compassionate, and faith-aligned choice.

