

WHO IS CARING FOR YOU?

Are you in private foster care?



**Private fostering information for
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**



What is Private Fostering?

Who are you living with?

- Are you living with someone who is not a close relative, meaning they're not a grandparent, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, legal guardian or other person with parental responsibility?

- Are you under 16 years old (or 18 if you are disabled)?

- Are you going to be living there for 28 days or more?

If you have said yes to these questions, then you are living in a Private Fostering arrangement.

Your mum, dad or guardian may not know they are part of the private fostering process. Private fostering happens when a family friend or someone who is not a close relative of your family is caring for you.

If however, you are cared for by a close family member or person with parental position then that is not private fostering.





Why Private Fostering happens?

There are lots of reasons why your mum, dad or guardian might need to ask someone they trust to look after you. It can be different for everyone!

Maybe your parents need to go into hospital for a long time or are going to be living away from you. The person who they ask might not be a close relative.

It may be a friend of theirs or a distant relative who they know and is someone they trust. Your mum, dad or guardian will not usually do this without a great deal of thought.

It is very important that your mum, dad or guardian have talked about why they want someone to look after you, and how they are going to make sure you go to school and stay healthy.

We want you to be as happy as possible!



What should you do?

It is important that you speak to the person caring for you as soon as possible. Let them know that you think you are in the Private Fostering process.

**Contact officers within the Local Authority:
0151 934 3596/2533**

You, your parents/guardian or carer can ring up this number for more information.

Child services will need to know about:

- **How long you're going to be staying with your carer; when it started or plans to start**
- **Your information, such as: name, date of birth, religion, racial origin and language**
- **Your carers' previous addresses for the last five years**
- **If your carer has broken any rules before or ever been in trouble**
- **If your carer has been stopped from Private Fostering before**

We want to make sure you are living in a safe place that will make you happy.



What help and support you can get?

If the arrangement is approved, the social worker will continue to support you.

Your social worker will visit you at least every 6 weeks

They will request to see you alone if you are old enough. They will also arrange a review meeting with your parents/guardian, the carers and you every six months to see how the arrangement is working for you all and what support is needed.

The plan will be put in place to obtain services from other agencies as well as Children's Services to help you and your carer if needed. They can also arrange training for your carer.

If anything changes during your placement with a private foster carer, then it is important you, your carer or parent/guardian are in contact with Children's Services to discuss the situation and keep everything up to date.



If your placement is not agreed?

Your social worker will discuss the situation with: you, your parents/guardian and your carers to find a different solution. This could involve:

- **You returning home to your parents/guardian, with support services provided**
- **You going to live with a relative**
- **You being cared for by the Local Authority**

If you continue to stay with your private foster carer, this could be seen as an offence and your carer and parents/guardian might be in trouble.

If your parent/guardian and carer wish to appeal against this decision they should notify Children's Services as soon as possible.

They will then be told what the next steps are.



Contact number to talk about your private fostering arrangement: 0151 934 3596/2533