

What is Private Fostering?



Children who are cared for on a full-time basis by people who are not direct relatives are in a private fostering arrangement.

A Private Fostering arrangement is essentially one that is made, without the involvement of a local authority, for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative for 28 days or more.

WHO IS A PRIVATE FOSTER CARER?

Private foster carers may be from the extended family, such as a cousin or great aunt. However, a person who is a relative such as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt (whether of full or half blood or by marriage) or step-parent will not be a private foster carer.

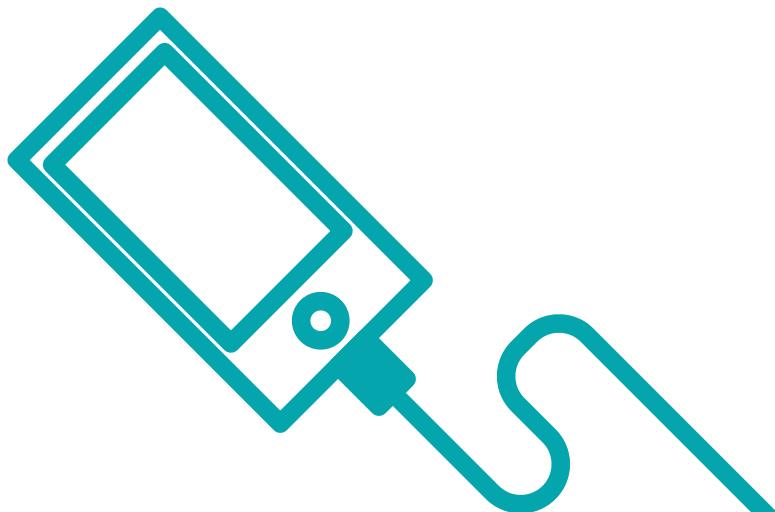
WHAT TO DO IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS IN A PRIVATE FOSTERING ARRANGEMENT

If you know of a child in this situation, the law says you must notify the local authority so they can make sure the person caring for the child can receive information, support and advice and that the child is safe.

If you are:

- Caring for someone else's child
- A child or young person being looked after by someone other than a blood relative
- A parent who's child is being looked after by someone else
- A health, social care or education professional who is aware of a private fostering arrangement

Please call 0121 788 4300 to let us know. The law requires that we should be informed at least six weeks before the arrangement begins. If an arrangement is made in an emergency the notification must be made within 48 hours and if the child is already being looked after then you should let us know straight away. Failure to notify us of a private fostering arrangement is an offence.



WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

A social worker will be in touch to arrange a visit to the private foster carer's household to make sure that the placement is suitable and that all the needs of the child or children are being met. They will also speak to the child or young person themselves. A social worker will work with the private foster carer and the parents to offer support and advice. All members of the family living in the private foster home that are aged 16 and over must have a DBS (police) check .

Where the private fostering arrangement is agreed by the local authority as suitable for the child(ren) being cared for the foster carer and the child will be visited every six weeks by a social worker for the first year and every three months after that, providing the child stays with the same carer.

CONTACT DETAILS

Please call us if you are caring for, or you know anyone who is caring for someone else's child on 0121 788 4300 or visit <https://bit.ly/2krupeZ> for more information.