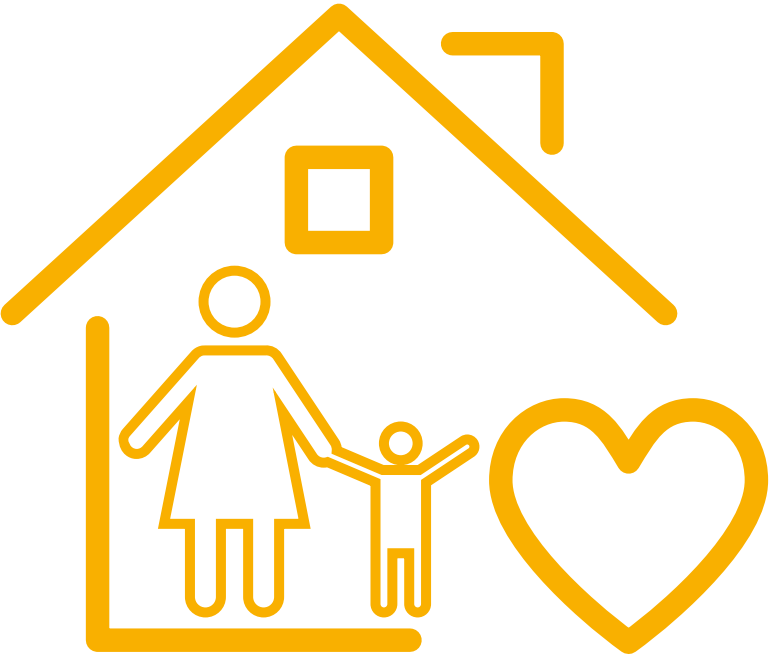




LOOKING AFTER SOMEONE ELSE'S

child?



**Information for
private foster
carers in
Birmingham**



If you are looking after someone else's child, who is not a close relative, then this could be a Private Fostering arrangement and the law says you need to please let us know.

What is a private foster carer?

A private foster carer is someone who has made a private caring arrangement with a parent and:

- Is caring for someone else's child or children who are under the age of 16 (or under 18 if disabled),
- Is not the child's parent or a close relative (a close relative is a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, including both full and half relations and relations by marriage),
- Intends to look after (or has looked after) the child for a continuous period of 28 days or more.

This does not apply to arrangements made by Birmingham Children's Trust or arrangements made under a court order.

What should I do if I agree to foster privately?

If you agree to look after someone else's child in a private arrangement, then you do need to tell us at least 6 weeks before the child moves in with you. If the arrangement is made in an emergency, then you should tell us 48 hours before the child moves into your home.

If you are already caring for someone then please let us know straight away. It is very important you do this even if you are not sure because it is actually against the law not to let us know. This is because Birmingham Children's Trust has a legal duty to safeguard the wellbeing of privately fostered children.

What happens when I contact the Local Authority?

A Social Worker will get in touch with you to give you advice and support. They will ask you to complete a form to register the arrangement for the child. The Social Worker will talk to you and each member of the household to make sure that the arrangement is suitable for you, your family and the child who is due to move in with/ is living with you.

The Social Worker will write a report on the arrangement and will send you a copy.

What happens while I am privately fostering?

Your Social Worker will visit you both every 6 weeks in the first year of the arrangement. These visits are to make sure the arrangement continues to go well and to offer advice and support. This frequency may change to every 12 weeks in the following years.

Your Social Worker will work together with you, the child and their parents to ensure that the best possible arrangements are in place for the child. This includes:

- Listening to what the child wants.
- Providing advice on benefits and other community or local services.
- Helping to ensure that the child's cultural needs are being met.



What are my responsibilities as a private foster carer?

As with any child, you commit to providing a safe and caring place for the child to live and also to;

- Arrange medical and dental care.
- Ensure the child attends school.
- Help the child keep in touch with their family where possible.
- Work together with the children's social work service for the benefit of the child.

You also need to tell the Social Worker if:

- You move house,
- You, or any member in your household are convicted of a criminal offence,
- Any person moves into your household or leaves your household,
- You stop privately fostering the child.

Private foster carers must also inform the local authority if they have a child removed from their care by an Order of the Court, their registration as a child-minder or day care provider is cancelled or refused, or a child in their care should die.

Financial responsibility for the child remains with the child's parent.

Contact Information

To tell us about a private fostering arrangement or ask us any questions, please call:

0121 303 1888 or you can e-mail **CASS@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk**

Further information is also available on our website:

www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/privatefostering

If you have any other concerns about a child's welfare, you should notify children's social care immediately using the contact details above.

If you would like a copy of this leaflet in another language, in large print, in Braille or on audio tape or CD, please phone

0121 303 3401 or email **trustcomms@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk**

