

One Minute Guide

What is Private Fostering?

Private fostering is where a private arrangement has been made by the child's parent (or someone with parental responsibility) and;

- the child is under the age of 16 (or 18 if the child is disabled)
- the child is living with a carer who is not a close relative (defined as: grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt or stepparent by marriage)
- the arrangement is expected to last for more than 28 days and on a full time basis

What to do if you know of a private fostering arrangement?

The law says that in a private fostering situation, the local authority or Trust has a legal duty to make sure these children are safe and well cared for.

If you are:

- a parent that is entering into a private fostering arrangement;
- someone that's caring for someone else's child;
- an education, health or social care professional who knows or suspects that a child is being privately fostered;

you have a legal duty to let us know six weeks before the start of the private fostering arrangement. If the arrangement is made in an emergency this information should be provided within 48 hours of the child being placed. If the child is already being looked after then you should let the local authority know straight away.



What will happen when I contact you?

A Social Worker will get in touch with the parents and the foster carer to give them advice and support. They'll ask the carer to complete a form to register the care arrangement for the child. They'll talk to each member of the household to make sure that the arrangement is suitable for the child who is due to move in. The Social Worker will work together with the carer, 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

The Social Worker will visit the child and their carer(s) every six 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. The frequency of home visits may change to every 12 weeks in the following years.

Contact Details

In Birmingham, work with private foster carers is coordinated by the Family and Friends Service. All notifications of private fostering arrangements are made through Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS).

Tel: **0121 303 1888**

Email: **CASS@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk**

For more information

**[birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/
privatefostering](http://birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/privatefostering)**



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