

If you:

- are a parent whose child is or will be cared for by someone other than a close relative for more than 28 days
- are a carer planning on, or already looking after someone else's child for more than 28 days
- become aware of a private fostering arrangement.

Please contact:

T: 01484 456848

More information on private fostering available at:

www.kirkleessafeguardingchildren.co.uk



Information for parents and carers

- Is your child living with someone who is not a close relative?
- Are you looking after someone else's child?
- Do you know about a child being looked after by somebody other than their parents?



Yes?

Then the council needs to know so that we can make sure the child is safe and well cared for.

What is private fostering?

If a child lives with someone who is not a close relative for more than 28 days then this is called private fostering. A child means a young person under 16 (or 18 if they have a disability). A close relative can be a grandparent, aunt, uncle, brother, sister, step parent or legal guardian.

Who needs to know and why?

The government has made it the law to inform local councils about any private fostering arrangements. The council will make sure the children and young people are kept safe, are being well cared for and are happy.

What should parents do?

If your child is living with somebody else you must tell the council. Even though your child is being privately fostered they are still your legal responsibility. You should be involved in all decisions about their care.

So that your child receives the best support you should give the private foster carer as much information about them as possible. This should include things like the kinds of food they prefer, how they are getting on at school, hobbies, medical records, religion and culture.

What should private foster carers do?

Help the child understand that they are being privately fostered and that they can still see their parents if they want to. You should make sure that the council has been notified about the private fostering arrangement.

You should keep the council informed of any changes in your household or if you move house. You must tell the council when the arrangement ends, why it has ended and pass on details of the person who is now looking after the child.

What should other people do?

Anyone who becomes aware of a private fostering arrangement has a legal duty to tell the council. Privately fostered children are one of the largest groups of vulnerable children in the UK.

What does the council do?

We will work together with the child, parent and private foster carer to make sure that the best possible arrangements are in place. We will make regular visits to see how the child has settled and check that the child is safe and being well cared for in appropriate accommodation. We will ensure that the person caring for the child gets the support and advice they need including advice about benefits that may be available.

When the time comes for the child to return home we will be there to offer help and support.

If we have any concerns about an arrangement we will tell the parents (or person with parental responsibility). If it wasn't possible for the child to return home, the council will decide what action to take to make sure the child is kept safe and well.

