

Private Fostering

What is Private Fostering

Private fostering is a private arrangement between a child's parents and another person, who is not a close relative, to care for a child who is under 16 (18 if disabled) for longer than 28 days.

Notifying Children's Social Services

If you intend to foster a child privately you must let Children's Social Services know, at least 6 weeks before the child arrives to live with you.

If you were not aware of this at the time, you should notify them as soon as you become aware.

If a professional becomes aware of a private fostering situation, they should advise the person concerned to contact Children's Social Services but the professional should also notify them.

What information to give

The law says you must provide the following information:

- the name, sex, date and place of birth, racial origin and cultural background.
- the name & address of the proposed foster parents and any previous address over the last 5 years.
- the purpose and intended length of the fostering arrangement.
- the name & address of the child's parents or anyone with parental responsibility.
- the date the fostering arrangement is to begin or it began.

The Carer & Children's Social Services

Children's Social Services has the responsibility for assessing the suitability of every private foster placement and to offer advice and help to all and make regular visits to see the child and you.

Restrictions

If Children's Social Services feel that the proposed arrangement in a private foster home is unsuitable, they can take action to stop the placement or impose specific requirements.

Cultural, Racial and Religious Identity

It is essential that children's cultural, racial and religious identity is affirmed within any private foster placement. In some cases this will mean that skin care, hair care and diet will need special attention.

Health

To ensure consistent health care, privately fostered children should be registered with the foster carer's own GP.

How many children can be privately fostered

Unless all the children are brothers & sisters Children's Social Services' permission is required to foster more than 3 children at any one time.

Golden rules of private fostering

- Notify Children's Social Services
- Get written consent from the parents to have care of the child
- Make sure you have all the background information before the child is placed with you.
- If the child is from abroad check their immigration status.
- Register the child with your GP.