

What can't a private foster carer do?

As a private foster carer, you are not allowed to do any of the following without the parent's consent:

- Change the child's name;
- Change the child's school;
- Take the child on holiday;
- Move the child to stay with another family.

Is private fostering like foster care?

No, private fostering and foster care are different.

With private fostering, a child is not 'in care' but the local council/social services department will check that they are safe and well.

With foster care, a child is placed in the care of an approved foster carer because of safeguarding issues or concerns.



Contact us

To let us know about a private fostering arrangement, please contact our MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) Team on any of the following ways:



01753 875 362



Sloughchildren.referrals@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk



The MASH Team, Slough Children First, Observatory House, 25 Windsor Road, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 2EL

Translations and other formats

If you'd like this document translated or in another format please let us know.

Complaints

If you have a private fostering arrangement, please talk to your social worker or their manager if you're unhappy about anything.

If this doesn't help, you can contact the Complaints Manager on [01753 875825](tel:01753875825) or at complaints@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk



Private fostering

A guide for private foster carers



What is private fostering?

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if they have a disability), goes to live with someone who is not a close relative for 28 days or more.

A close relative includes a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle or step-parent through marriage or civil partnership.

Who can privately foster?

People who are not a close relative that can privately foster include:

- A great aunt/uncle;
- A Cousin;
- A friend of the family;
- A neighbour.



This isn't a complete list so if you are unsure please contact Slough Children First's MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) Team via tel on 01753 875362 or via email at:

Sloughchildren.referrals@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk



Examples of private fostering arrangements

There are many reasons why a child or young person might go into private foster care.

This includes:

- Their parent/guardian is ill and unable to look after them for a while;
- They aren't getting on with other family members living in the house;
- They want to stay with their boyfriend or girlfriend's family;
- Their parent/guardian's study involves unsociable hours which makes it difficult for them to use ordinary day care or after school care.

Do I need to tell anyone about a private fostering arrangement?

Yes. The law requires that you tell your Local Authority at least six weeks before the arrangement begins, unless the arrangement is made in an emergency, which means you must tell them within 48 hours.

If you're already a private foster carer and you haven't said, don't worry you won't be in trouble but please let us know.

What if anything changes?

Please let us know:

- If the child leaves their private fostering arrangement;
- The name and address of the new person who will now be caring for them if the arrangement changes;
- About any other significant changes.

What can a private foster carer do?

As a private foster carer, you will be responsible for providing a child with day to day care.

Before the child comes to live with you, you should make sure the parent(s) give you as much information as possible about their child, for example:

- Health and medical needs;
- Cultural needs;
- Education - if and what they're studying
- Hobbies and interests;
- How to discipline them.

