

# Private Fostering

Are you looking  
after someone  
else's child?



this is Redcar & Cleveland

## What is private fostering?

Private Fostering is a private agreement where a parent asks another adult to look after their child.

If a child under 16 (or under 18 if the child has a disability) is cared for and lives with someone other than:

- A parent
- A person who is not the parent but who has parental responsibility
- A close relative (Grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt)

for a period intended to last more than 28 days.

Private Fostering is based on parental consent – if a parent has not agreed for someone else to look after their child, then the arrangement is not Private Fostering.

Private Fostering arrangements are quite separate from arrangements made by the Local Authority for 'children looked after' and living with foster carers.

Private Fostering covers many situations, including children who are temporarily away from their families, children of overseas students and refugee or displaced children. This

includes children who have had a disagreement with their parents and have gone to live with a neighbour or a school friend's family.

## Who pays for the care of the child?

The parent should arrange to pay for the upkeep of the child. Any financial arrangements are the responsibility of the parent and the carer.

The person in receipt of Child Benefit should let the Department for Work & Pensions know that the child is to be privately fostered for longer than 6 weeks.

## Who needs to know?

The law says that the Local Authority must be told so that they can make sure the child is well cared for. The Local Authority should be told at least 6 weeks (but no more than 13 weeks) before the arrangement is due to start.

If you are already privately fostering a child, or looking after a child in an emergency, you must notify the Local Authority within 48 hours.

## How is it arranged?

Private Fostering is arranged and agreed by the child's parents and the person or family who will be caring for the child. It is based on parental consent - if there

is no parental agreement, then the arrangement is not private fostering.

## What will the Local Authority do after they are told?

The Local Authority has a duty to satisfy themselves that the welfare of privately fostered children is being satisfactorily safeguarded and promoted.

### They will:

- Make regular visits to make sure that children are safe and well cared for.
- Check different aspects of the private fostering arrangement to make sure that the arrangement is a suitable one, including carrying out checks on the private foster carers and their home.
- Provide advice to children, private foster carers and parents.

The Local Authority does not approve private foster carers but:

- They have the power to stop a person from private fostering if the carer or the accommodation is not suitable.
- If they consider something is not satisfactory, they can make the carer take action to sort out the problem, for example, by installing fire guards or smoke alarms.

## What are the private foster carer's responsibilities?

They must offer the child a safe and loving place to live and help the child keep in touch with their own family and a Social Worker. They must make sure that the child is registered with a GP and that their health and dental needs are met. They must also make sure that any needs arising from the child's religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural and linguistic background are met.

They must also tell the Local Authority if anyone else comes to live with them and when the child leaves their care, stating why and giving the name and address of the person into whose care the child has moved.

## Is there a limit to the number of children a person can privately foster?

Yes, they are not usually permitted to foster more than three children at a time – unless they are brothers and sisters.

## What information does the Local Authority need from me if I am going to Privately Foster a child or young person?

A notification form is attached that includes all of the information required which should be completed and returned to the local authority.



# Notification of a Proposed/Existing\* Private Fostering Arrangement

(\*Delete as appropriate)

## The person making this notification

Your name ..... Your Address .....

Your relationship to the child(ren).....

.....

Please list your previous addresses over the last 5 years on a separate sheet

## Details of the child(ren)

Name ..... Date(s) of Birth .....

Address (prior to placement)..... Place of Birth .....

..... Religion .....

..... Racial Origin .....

..... Language .....

When is the child due to arrive? .....

How long is the child expected to stay? .....

Name ..... Date(s) of Birth .....

Address (prior to placement)..... Place of Birth .....

..... Religion .....

..... Racial Origin .....

..... Language .....

When is the child due to arrive?.....

How long is the child expected to stay? .....

## Current/Proposed Private Foster Carer

Name ..... Address .....

Relationship to the child(ren).....

Phone Number .....

Please list all of the private foster carer's previous addresses over the last 5 years on a separate sheet



## Child(ren)'s parents or other person with parental responsibility

Name ..... Name .....

Address..... Address .....

Phone Number ..... Phone Number .....

Who is/was caring for the child(ren) immediately before the Private Fostering arrangement is due to start/started:

Name ..... Address .....

Relationship to the child(ren).....

Does the child have any siblings aged under 18? .....

If yes, please record their name(s), current address(es) and details of the arrangements for their care: .....

If anyone not already mentioned on this form has been involved (whether or not directly) in arranging for the child to be privately fostered please record their:

Name ..... Address .....

Relationship to the child(ren).....

## This section should only be completed if the notification is being made by a proposed/actual private foster carer:

Have you, any member of you household or anyone employed in your household ever been convicted of any offences by a court of law?

YES  NO

If yes, please identify who and give date(s) and details:

Have you, any member of you household or anyone employed in your household ever been:

Barred from working with children or vulnerable adults?

YES  NO

Disqualified from acting as a foster parent or caring for children?

YES  NO

Prohibited from privately fostering a child?

YES  NO

Refused registration or had your registration cancelled in respect of a children's home, voluntary home, nursery, provision of day care or child minding?

YES  NO

Involved in the management of, or had any financial interest in a children's home or voluntary home which has had its registration cancelled?

YES  NO

The parent of, or had the care of a child who has been made the subject of a care order or a supervision order?

YES  NO

## Contact details

Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council,  
Children and Families Directorate,  
Seafield House,  
Kirkleatham Street,  
Redcar, TS10 1SP

**01642 771500**

**[www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](http://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk)**

**Out of hours and weekend contact**

**Emergencies Only**

**08702 402994**