

Private Fostering a guidance for young people



What is private fostering?

You are in a private fostering arrangement if you are under the age of 16 or 18 if registered disabled, and your parents or your close family asks an adult to care for you for a period of 28 days or longer in their home.

If you think you are living in a private fostering arrangement your carer must notify the Local Authority.

What Support will the Local Authority's Social Worker provide me?

The law says that the Local Authority needs to know who is looking after you and where you are living to make sure that you are safe, happy and are being properly cared for.

When the Local Authority hears about the private fostering arrangement, it will arrange for a private fostering social worker to carry out an assessment of your carer(s) and the environment in which you live, and you will be allocated a social worker who will visit your home every six weeks and give you their contact number.

This is to ensure that you are happy in the home and feeling safe. You will also be asked about what you think about your situation and so will your parents if it is possible to contact them.

What should my Private Foster Carer provide for me?

Whilst in a private fostering arrangement the carer should provide you with all the everyday care that you need for example:

- Ensure that your health needs are taken care of
- Make sure that you go to school and learn
- Take you to the dentist to ensure that your teeth are properly looked after
- Help you stay in touch with your family
- Help you follow any religions and customs that are important to you
- Give you regular meals
- Make sure that you have a chance to make friends and take part in activities that you enjoy.



What should my Private Foster Carer Not Do?

Your foster carer should not:

- change your name
- take you overseas without the agreement of your parents
- move you to another family without arranging this with your parents and informing the Local Authority.
- Change your school without making an arrangement about this with your parents first.

Remember – your parents are still responsible for you and they will make all important decisions about you and what happens to you.



What do I do if I have problems with my Private Foster Care Arrangement?

You can contact your allocated social worker and ask to speak with her/him to discuss the problem. If you are unable to contact your social worker and you are concerned about your safety and welfare, you can:

- Contact Family Contact Point on **t: 01793466903** as soon as possible between 9am to 5:00pm or
Emergency Duty Service **t: 01793 436699**
(after 5pm and before 9am weekdays and weekends).

Other Helpful Contacts:

ChildLine **t: 0800 1111**

NSPCC **t: 0808 800 5000**

This information is available on the internet at www.swindon.gov.uk. It can be produced in a range of languages and formats (such as large print, Braille or other accessible formats) by contacting the Customer Services Department.
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