



Private Fostering Information for Parents

If your child is being privately fostered it is understandable that you may have lots of questions – this sheet aims to help answer some of these.

Who is responsible for my child?

As a parent, you are still responsible for your child while they are living with private foster carers. It is important that you are involved as much as possible in your child's life – this means telling the carer about your child, supporting them financially, and keeping in touch with them regularly.

The arrangements you have agreed with the private foster carers should be written down. It is important that the carers have written consent from you for your child to receive everyday medical treatment. Your child's social worker can help and advise you about this.

So that your child's education and healthcare are not disrupted, they should stay at the same school and have the same doctor if this is possible.

Why will a social worker visit my child and the carer?

The social worker's job is to make sure your child is safe, and that their needs are being met, in the right way for them, while they are living away from you. This means making sure that their racial, cultural, and religious needs are being met and that the accommodation and sleeping arrangements are suitable.

The social worker will talk to your child about his/her feelings and wishes about being privately fostered.

How often will they visit?

The social worker will visit your child at the private foster carer's home every 6 weeks for the first year, and every three months after that, for as long as they stay with the same carer. The social worker will talk to other people who live in the same house and they will usually see your child on their own. Every time the social worker visits, they will write a report.

One of the things the social worker will ask about on every visit is how long the arrangement is going on for. This is so the plan remains focused on meeting the needs of your child. Any changes in your circumstances or the child's, private foster

carers can be planned for. If your plans change, you must let the social worker know as soon as possible.

What else can the social worker do?

The social worker will support the private foster carer to give the best possible care for your child and will offer advice and training to the private foster carers.

The social worker can give you advice and support so that you can make other arrangements for the care of your child if private fostering is not the right arrangement for your child.

We can take action to stop a Private Fostering arrangement if there is evidence that the child may be at risk.

What to do if you still have questions

If you want to know more, or to talk about anything in this information sheet, get in touch your child's social worker.

Somerset County Council positively values diversity, and celebrates cultural and social differences. Our Equal Opportunities Promise is to provide all services of equal quality, which meet your needs and fulfil your rights. You can expect to be treated fairly with understanding whoever you are and whatever your background.

This document is available on request in other formats, including Braille and large print, and can be translated into other languages.

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