

Private Fostering

Information for parents

Private Fostering- If any child under the age of 16 is living with someone who is not their immediate relative for a period of 28 days or more it may mean that the child is being 'privately fostered'.



Contact us today:

Tel: 01225 394949

Email: fostering@bathnes.gov.uk

www.bathnes.gov.uk/privatefostering

**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**

This publication about fostering can be made available in a range of community languages, large print, braille, on tape, electronic and accessible formats from the Family Placement Team.

Have you made arrangements for someone else to care for your child?

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What is private fostering?

Private fostering is when someone under the age of 16, or 18 if disabled, is living with someone other than a parent or close relative for 28 consecutive days or more. Private foster carers may be extended family such as a cousin or great aunt, a friend of the family or parents of a child's boyfriend or girlfriend. They could also be someone unknown to the family who is willing to care for the child.

Private fostering arrangements are usually temporary. Parents should give as much information to the carers as possible about their child including details about:

- ◆ Family culture
- ◆ Language
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Diet
- ◆ Contact arrangements
- ◆ Health

Who is responsible for my child?

As a parent you are still responsible for your child whilst 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 to receive everyday medical treatment.

If possible your child should stay at the same school and the same doctors surgery so as not to disrupt their education or healthcare provision.



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

The social workers job is to make sure your child is safe and that their needs are met while they are living away from their parents. The social worker will talk to your child about their wishes and feelings and try to understand their perspective on the arrangements that have been made for their care. The social worker will try to ensure that the child's racial, cultural and religious needs are being met and that accommodation and sleeping arrangements are suitable.

How often will they visit?



The social worker will visit your child at the private foster carers home every 4-6 weeks during 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 anyone who lives in the same house and will usually see the child on their own. Every time the social worker visits they will record notes about their visit.

What else can the social worker do?

The social worker will support the private foster carer to meet all the needs of your child and will offer advice and training opportunities.

The social worker can offer you advice and information on how suitable the arrangement you have made might be for you child and can explore alternative care arrangements with you if necessary.

If the local authority finds that a placement is unsuitable then action will be taken to place requirements on the private foster carer or action may be taken to end the placement.