

**The Children's Services department does not approve private foster carers but:**

- it has the power to stop the arrangement if the carer or accommodation is not suitable;
- if it considers something is not right, it can instruct the carer to take action to address the problem, for example, installing smoke alarms.

**What are the responsibilities of private foster carers?**

Private foster carers must offer the child a safe, caring place to live and help them keep in touch with their own family and social worker. They must also:



- arrange for the child to have a medical examination either before or soon after the child comes to stay with them;
- ensure the child attends school;



- inform the Children's Services department if anybody else comes to live with them;
- inform the Children's Services department when the child leaves and give the address of the person who will be caring for the child.

**What next?**

If you are privately fostering a child or young person or are about to do so, a notification form is attached that includes all of the information needed. This form should be completed and sent to:

Private Fostering  
Children's Services  
Medway Council  
Compass Centre  
Pembroke  
Chatham Maritime  
Kent ME4 4YH

If you would like more information or clarification about private fostering contact **Customer First**  
**Tel: 01634 333333**  
**Email: customer.first@medway.gov.uk**

This document is available in other languages, for further information please contact Medway Council Customer Services on 01634 334466

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| এই লিফলেট সম্পর্কে আপনার যদি কোন প্রশ্ন থাকে এবং এ ব্যাপারে আপনার নিজের ভাষায় কাহারা সাথে আলোচনা করতে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে এই নম্বরে টেলিফোন করুন:              | 331780<br>(Bengali)  |
| 如果你對這本小冊的內容有任何疑問，且想與會說你的語言的某人談話，請打這短電話號碼  | 331781<br>(Chinese)  |
| જો તમને આ પત્રિકા વિશે કોઈ પ્રશ્નો હોય અને તમે તમારી માતૃભાષામાં કોઈની સાથે વાત કરવા માંગતા હો તો કૃપા કરીને આ નંબર ઉપર કોન કરો                                 | 331782<br>(Gujarati) |
| यदि आपने इस लिफलेट के बारे में कुछ प्रश्न हैं और उस व्यक्ति के साथ आप अपनी भाषा में बात करना चाहते हैं, तो कृपया निम्नलिखित नंबर पर टेलीफोन करने करें:          | 331783<br>(Hindi)    |
| ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਲੀਫਲੈਟ ਦੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੁਝ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨਾਂ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹੋ ਅਤੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਉਸ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਆਪਣੀ ਭੋਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਨੀ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਅੱਗੇ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ: | 331784<br>(Punjabi)  |
| اگر آپ اس کتابچے کے بارے میں کوئی سوال پوچھنا چاہتے ہیں اور آپ کسی فرد سے اپنی زبان میں بات کرنے کے خواہشمند ہیں تو براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر فون کیجئے۔          | 331785<br>(Urdu)     |
| Elinizdeki bu yazılı duyuru ile ilgili herhangi bir sorunuz varsa ve dilinizi bilen birisi ile konuşmak istiyorsanız, lütfen 331786 numaraya telefon edin.      | 331786<br>(Turkish)  |

# Information about private fostering

Are you looking after someone else's child?



Is your child living with another family?

## What is private fostering?

Private fostering is when a child or young person under 16-years-old (or 18 if they have a disability) is looked after for 28 days or more by someone other than:

- a parent;
- a person who is not the parent but has parental responsibility;
- a relative.

It is not private fostering if the arrangement was made by the Children's Services department or if the person looking after the child is an approved foster carer.

There are many reasons why people privately foster and why a parent would arrange for someone to care for their child for a fixed period of time. Common situations may be:

- children, adolescents and teenagers living apart from their families while their parents go to work, college or hospital;
- children with parents overseas;
- children living with host families;
- children on holiday exchanges.

### How is it arranged?

Private fostering is arranged and agreed by the child's parent(s) and the person or family who will be caring for the child. It is based on parental consent.

If the parent has not agreed for someone else to look after their child, then the arrangement is not private fostering.



The parent is responsible for the financial upkeep of their child with specific arrangements agreed between the parent and carer.

If you receive child benefit and your child is going to be privately fostered for more than six weeks, you must inform the department of Works and Pensions.



### Who needs to know – what the law says

By law, your local Children's Services department must be informed about all private fostering situations. The child's parent(s), private foster carer and anyone involved in private fostering must inform the authorities in writing accordingly:

|  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| <b>If the child is not yet living with private foster carers</b>             | <b>Six weeks before</b> |
| <b>If the child will move in with private foster carers within six weeks</b> | <b>Immediately</b>      |
| <b>If the child is already with private foster carers</b>                    | <b>Immediately</b>      |

## What should professionals do?

Professionals should make sure the Children's Services department is informed about any private fostering arrangements. This includes a wide range of people who regularly come into contact with children, such as teachers, religious leaders, doctors and health visitors. All professionals should encourage the child's parent(s) and carer to notify the local Children's Services department

**You will not be breaching confidentiality by contacting Children's Services.**

**You will be helping to safeguard children and young people.**

### What will Children's Services do?

The Children's Services department has a duty to ensure that the welfare of privately fostered children and young people is being promoted and safeguarded. They will work in partnership with the child, parent(s) and carer to ensure that the best arrangements are in place by:



- making regular visits to the child and carer. This makes sure the arrangements and premises are suitable;
- helping to make sure the child's racial, cultural, linguistic and religious needs are being met;
- offering advice and support to the child, their parents and the private foster carer.