

Are you looking after  
someone else's child?



Is your child living  
with someone else?

# Private Fostering in Brighton & Hove



## What is private fostering?

Private fostering is when a child or young person under the age of 16 (or 18 if they have a disability) is being cared for by someone who is not their parent or close relative for 28 days or more. Close relatives include parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and step-parents.

### It is not private fostering:

- If the carer is the child's legal parent
- If the carer has parental responsibility
- If the carer is an approved foster carer and the arrangement was made by social services
- If the arrangement lasts for less than 28 days

### Some examples of private fostering situations include:

- A teenager living with friends or in the home of a boyfriend or girlfriend
- Younger children placed with friends of the family on a long-term basis following family breakdown or parent's ill health
- Overseas students who are living with a carer for over 28 days
- Children in boarding schools who live with another family during school holidays
- Children needing to be cared for because their parent(s) work away from home

## What the parent needs to do

- Notify the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) of the intended arrangement in writing at least six weeks before the arrangement begins or within 48 hours if it is made at short notice by telephone on 01273 290400 or through email at [FrontDoorForFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:FrontDoorForFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk)
- Complete a written agreement with the carer and local authority giving the private foster carer written permission to seek emergency medical treatment for your child
- Ensure that the carer has all information needed to care for your child appropriately. This may include details about your family routine, language and culture. You may also need to tell the carer about your child's eating preferences, education, hobbies and interests.
- Make appropriate financial arrangements with the carer to maintain your child in the arrangement
- Agree arrangements to keep in contact with your child

**It is an offence not to notify within the specified timescale. If you are unsure, please seek advice from Brighton & Hove City Council Children's Services.**

Telephone: 01273 290400

Email: [FrontDoorForFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:FrontDoorForFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk)



## What the private foster carer needs to do

- Notify the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) of the intention to privately foster a child or within 48 hours of the arrangement taking place by telephone on 01273 290400 or through email at [FrontDoorForFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:FrontDoorForFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk)
- Allow a social worker to visit the private foster home to see the child, inspect your home and make reasonable recommendations
- Provide information as required
- Comply with legal requirements e.g. to have a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check
- Promote the health, education and welfare of the child in your care

**If you would like further advice about private fostering please contact Brighton & Hove City Council Children's Services.**

Telephone: 01273 290400

Email: [FrontDoorForFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:FrontDoorForFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

## The law in relation to private fostering

**The law says that the Local Authority must be told about all private fostering situations. The child's parent(s), private foster carer(s) or anyone else involved in the arrangement are legally required to inform children's services within the following timescales.**

- At least six weeks before the child moves in with private foster carers
- Or**
- Immediately if the child is moving in less than six weeks or is already living with private foster carers

Privately fostered children and young people are particularly vulnerable as the arrangements for their care are often made at a time when the family is under acute stress. This could be as a result of poverty, ill health, family disruption or breakdown or any number of factors.

Sometimes parents do not agree with their child staying with someone else and may believe their child to be at risk. It is vital that arrangements for privately fostered children are assessed to ensure their suitability and that the welfare of privately fostered children is actively monitored and promoted.



## Who else can notify the local authority about private fostering arrangements?

Any one who comes into contact with the child and is aware that they are privately fostered has a duty to inform the local authority.

### This may include:

- Another family member
- A teacher, doctor, health visitor, church leader
- A friend or neighbour

By notifying children's services you will be helping to safeguard a child or young person

**If you think you know a child who is being privately fostered please contact Brighton & Hove City Council Children's Services on 01273 290400.**

## What the local authority needs to do

- Visit the private foster home and make an assessment of the safety and suitability of the arrangement
- Take up medical, criminal record and referee checks on any adult living in the household
- Ensure birth parents are kept informed and continue to be involved in decision making for their child
- Monitor the welfare of the child and continue to assess the suitability of the private fostering arrangement
- Offer support, advice and training opportunities to private foster carers
- In cases where the local authority does not agree with a private fostering arrangement it has the power to disqualify a person from privately fostering

**If you would like more information on the local authority's responsibilities towards privately fostered children, please contact us on 01273 290400 or by email: [FrontDoorForFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:FrontDoorForFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk)**



If you require more general advice or information about private fostering please contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and we will try to help you.

Telephone: 01273 290400

Email: [FrontDoorForFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:FrontDoorForFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

If you think a child is at risk of harm and need to contact us outside of office hours, call our emergency duty team on 01273 335905 or contact the police.

**Translation? Tick this box and take to any council office**

ترجمة؟ ضع علامة في المربع وخذها إلى مكتب البلدية. Arabic

অনুবাদ? বক্সে টিক চিহ্ন দিয়ে কাউন্সিল অফিসে নিয়ে যান। Bengali

需要翻譯? 請在這方格內加刷, 並送回任何市議會的辦事處。Cantonese

ترجمه؟ لطفاً این مربع را علامتگذاری نموده و آن را به هر یک از دفاتر شهرداری ارائه نمایید. Farsi

Traduction? Veuillez cocher la case et apporter au council. French

需要翻译? 请在这方格内划勾, 并送回任何市议会的办事处。Mandarin

Tłumaczenie? Zaznacz to okienko i zwróć do któregośkolwiek biur samorządu lokalnego (council office). Polish

Tradução? Coloque um visto na quadrícula e leve a uma qualquer repartição de poder local (council office). Portuguese

Tercümesi için kareyi işaretleyiniz ve bir semt belediye bürosuna veriniz Turkish

other (please state)

**This can also be made available in alternative formats, eg large print, Braille, audio or BSL. Please contact us to discuss options.**

