



Private Fostering

A Guide For Carers

Find out more online:

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/privatefostering



worcestershire
county council

If you are caring for someone else's child who is under 16 (or 18 if the young person has a disability), for more than 28 days and you are not a close family member, you are a private foster carer.

It is not private fostering if the child is living with a grandparent, aunt or uncle or adult brother or sister, or if the carer has Parental Responsibility, a Residence Order or a Special Guardianship Order.

Some examples of private fostering are:

- children living with a friend's family because of difficulties at home
- teenagers living with the family of a boyfriend or girlfriend
- children living with a parent's unmarried partner when the parent leaves the home (for example is imprisoned)
- host families looking after children while they attend a language school
- children sent to this country for education or health care by parents living abroad
- children staying with a distant relative when their parents go abroad for an extended visit

What must I do if I am going to foster a child privately?

The law says that you must tell your local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement begins, or within 48 hours if it is an emergency.

It is an offence not to notify the local authority.

When you agree to look after the child or young person you must make sure that you get information about the child or young person from their parent, including information on health, school, eating preferences and interests, religious and cultural background.

What will the local authority do?

As a private foster carer you will have contact with two social workers from Children's Services.

The child or young person you are caring for will have their own social worker who will want to talk to you about the child or young person's needs and how you are meeting them. They will also want to see the child or young person on their own to seek their views on what help they might need. The child or young person will continue to have a social worker while they are privately fostered, and they will visit the child or young person every six weeks (or every 12 weeks if the child lives with you longer than a year).

A social worker from the Fostering and Kinship Team will also visit to undertake an assessment of you and whether you can provide a safe place for the child or young person you are caring for and meet their needs. They will want to meet all the members of your household and get their views about the child or young person living with you.

Both the social workers will write reports of the arrangements to look after the child or young person. One report will focus on the child or young person and their needs and the other will be about your household. You will get copies of these reports and be able to add your own comments.



The Assessment by the Fostering and Kinship Worker

You will be asked to complete forms so that the following checks can be made:

- Worcestershire County Council records
- CRB (Police check) to be completed by everyone over 18 in the household. If you or a member of your household have offences or are known to the police this will not automatically stop you from being a private foster carer but you should tell the social worker about this at the earliest opportunity so that this can be discussed with you
- Health form that is sent to your GP for comments
- Declaration of Suitability to be completed by everyone over 16 in the household

The social worker can help you complete these forms.



What happens about financial help?

Private fostering is a private arrangement between you and the child's parent, the person with Parental Responsibility or the school or agency if you are a host family. Financial arrangements should be made with them. You may be able to claim social security benefits such as Child Benefit, Tax Credits and Income Support. Child Benefit can be applied for using Form CH2. This is available at www.hmrc.gov.uk or 0845 302 1444. Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit can be applied for using Form TC600. This is available by phoning 0845 300 3900. Contact your local Benefits Agency Office who will be able to advise you.

In some cases there may be financial help from the local authority if a child is assessed to be in need. Talk to the child's social worker about this.

What other help is available while I am privately fostering?

The social worker from the Fostering and Kinship Team will not continue to visit you on a regular basis once the assessment is completed, but you can contact the Duty Worker in that team for advice and support. The Duty Worker can be contacted by phoning 01905 765546.

Integrated Service for Looked after and Adopted Children (ISL) is available to children who are privately fostered and advice may be available to you. Training courses run by ISL may also be available to you. Ask the social worker from the Fostering and Kinship Team if you are interested in knowing more.

All the universal services available to children in your area will also be available to children who are privately fostered and it is important that the child living with you is registered with a GP and a dentist and is attending school.

Who should know that I am privately fostering?

Please let the child's school know that you are privately fostering. If you rent your home, you should inform your landlord or housing association. If you have household insurance, you should let the insurance company know.

What happens after the assessment is completed?

When the checks and reports have been completed, a senior manager will agree the arrangement. You will get a letter to let you know that the arrangement has been agreed. You will also get a form asking you to let a social worker know if there are certain changes, for example if the privately fostered child leaves your home permanently or if another adult moves into your home. It is important that this information is given to the local authority.



What can I do if I'm not happy about the service from Children's Services?

Sometimes things go wrong and we need to know so that we can get it right in the future. Ask the social worker for the Worcestershire Children's Social Care Services "Compliment, Comments, Complaints" leaflet or contact:

Compliments, Comments, Complaints (Worcestershire)
Children's Social Care Services
Worcestershire County Council
County Hall
Worcester
WR5 2NP

Telephone: 01905 766366

Email: jgoodman@worcestershire.gov.uk



Useful Contacts

Family Information Service (FIS)

Can advise on many aspects of caring for children

familyinfo@worcestershire.gov.uk
www.worcestershire.gov.uk/familyinfo

Tel: **01905 822666** (9am – 5pm)

E Safety

Advice on keeping children and young people safe while using the internet

www.wes.networcs.net

Children's Centres

Provide information, advice and courses. Details of your local centre are available from the **Family Information Service** (shown above) or www.worcestershire.gov.uk/childrenscentres

Bursary Fund for 16-18 year olds

Information on financial help for some young people remaining in education.

www.ypla.gov.uk/learnersupport/16-19-bursary

Somebody Else's Child

Information about Private Fostering from BAAF (British Association for Adoption and Fostering)
www.privatefostering.org.uk

Drug and Alcohol Services

Information and advice.

SPACE for young people
Freephone: **0800 169 6064**

www.talktofrank.com

Pathways to Recovery for carers and young people

Tel: **0808 178 3295**

Legal Advice

The Children's Legal Centre can provide free advice

www.childrenslegalcentre.com

Tel: **0800 020 008**

You can contact us in the following ways:

By telephone:

0845 607 2000

By post:

Children's Services Access Centre, PO Box 585, Worcester WR4 4AD

By email:

childrensservices@worcestershire.gov.uk

Online:

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/privatefostering

This document can be made available in other formats (large print, audio tape, computer disk and Braille) on request from the Children's Services Access Centre on telephone number 0845 607 2000 or by emailing childrensservices@worcestershire.gov.uk

If you can not understand the contents of this document and do not have access to anyone who can translate it for you, please contact 01905 765765 for help.

বাংলা। আপনি যদি এই দস্তাবেজের বিষয়বস্তু বুঝতে না পারেন এবং আপনার জন্য অনুবাদ করার মত পরিচিত কেউ না থাকলে, অনুগ্রহ করে সাহায্যের জন্য 01905 765765 নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করুন। (Bengali)

廣東話。如果您對本文檔內容有任何不解之處並且沒有人能夠對此問題做出解釋，請撥打 01905 765765 尋求幫助。 (Cantonese)

普通话。如果您对本文件内容有任何不解之处并且没有人能够对此问题做出解释，请拨打 01905 765765 寻求帮助。 (Mandarin)

Polski jeżeli nie rozumieją Państwo treści tego dokumentu i nie znają nikogo, kto mógłby go dla Państwa przetłumaczyć, proszę zadzwonić pod numer 01905 765765 w celu uzyskania pomocy. (Polish)

Português. Se não conseguir compreender o conteúdo deste documento e não conhecer ninguém que lho possa traduzir, contacte o 01905 765765 para obter assistência. (Portuguese)

Español. Si no comprende el contenido de este documento ni conoce a nadie que pueda traducírselo, puede solicitar ayuda llamando al teléfono 01905 765765. (Spanish)

Türkçe. Bu dokümanın içeriğini anlayamazsanız veya dokümanı sizin için tercüme edebilecek birisine ulaşamıyorsanız, lütfen yardım için 01905 765765 numaralı telefonu arayınız. (Turkish)

اردو۔ اگر آپ اس دستاویز کی مشمولات کو سمجھنے سے قاصر ہیں اور کسی ایسے شخص تک آپ کی رسائی نہیں ہے جو آپ کے لیے اس کا ترجمہ کر سکے تو، براہ کرم مندر کے لیے 01905 765765 پر رابطہ کریں۔ (Urdu)

کردی سۆزاسی، ننگەر ناتۆاسی تێبگهی له نۆزۆکی نهم بێلگهی و نهمست به ههچ کس ننگات که وێبگهر بنهۆ بو، نکهله نهلۆن بکه یۆ ژمارهی 01905 765765 و داوای زانیی بکه (Kurdish)

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ। ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦੇ ਮਤਲਬ ਸਮਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦੇ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੇ ਜੋ ਇਸਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾ ਲਈ ਅਦਵਾਰਾ ਵਰ ਸਕੇ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਮਦਦ ਲਈ 01905 765765 'ਤੇ ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰੋ। (Punjabi)

To the best of our knowledge all information was correct at the time of printing: January 2012