

If I am in a private fostering arrangement, or want to be, what should I do next?

If you are already privately fostering, or intend to, it is important that you contact your local Children's Services Office. Addresses can be found on the back page of this leaflet.

If I am the parent of a child who is privately fostered what should I do?

You must also contact your local Children's Services Office and tell them about the arrangements you have made.

If I know someone who is, or intends to privately foster, what do i do?

You must contact your local children's services Office and let them know the information you have. You should try to gain the consent of the person who is privately fostering and the child's parents to pass on this information, or encourage them to call. However it is important to pass on this information anyway – this may help to safeguard a child, and will not be a breach of confidentiality.

If I am a child who is being privately fostered what do i need to do?

Take this leaflet to the person looking after you. You can also call your local Children's Services Office yourself if you want to tell us about the arrangement or need any help or advice.

You can contact us in the following ways:

for further information, please contact your local Children's Services Office:

- By Phone: 0845 607 2000
- By email: childrensservices@worcestershire.gov.uk
- By post: Children's Services, POBox 585, Worcester WR4 4AD
- By fax: 01905 768056
- By minicom: 01905 768052

By visiting your nearest customer centre:

- **Bromsgrove:**
Next to Dolphin Centre, School Drive, Bromsgrove.
- **Malvern:**
The Library, Graham Road, Malvern.
- **Redditch:**
Town Hall, Alcester Street, Redditch.
- **Worcester:**
Orchard House, Farrier St, Worcester.
- **Wychavon:** 44 High St, Droitwich; or Abbey Road, Evesham; or Civic Centre, Queen Drive, Bromsgrove.
- **Wyre Forest:**
Contact 0845 607 2000 for local information, Pershore.

This publication can be made available in other languages (including British Sign Language) and alternative formats (including large print, audio tape, computer disc and Braille) on request from Children's Services on telephone number 0845 6072000 or by emailing childrensservices@worcestershire.gov.uk

To the best of our knowledge all information is correct at time of printing. Dec 2008.

Private Fostering - taking care seriously



Do you or someone you know look after a child who is **not** related?

Private Fostering
taking care seriously

Find out more online:
www.worcestershire.gov.uk/privatefostering

What is private fostering?

Private fostering is the arrangement made usually between a child's parent and the private foster carer who becomes responsible for caring for the child.

Many children are cared for by people who are not their parents. The Children Act, 1989 sets out which of these people are private foster carers and which are not. By law, any person who is thinking of fostering a child privately must notify their Local Authority Children's Services Department at least 6 weeks before the child comes to live with them.

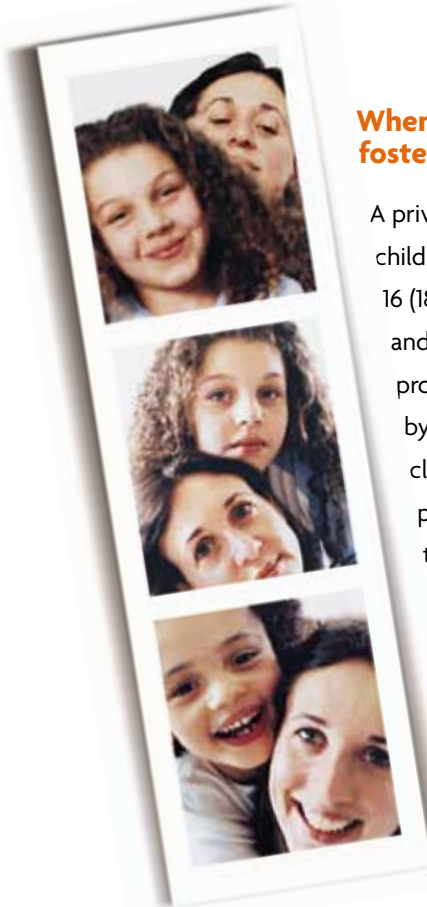
If a child comes in an emergency, Children's Services must be notified within 48 hours.

Some examples of Private Fostering are when teenagers live with friends because they are not getting on well with their parents, or their parents move out of the area. Host families who look after children studying with language schools or boarding schools for more than 28 days would also be privately fostering.

Children's Services must also be told when a private fostering arrangement ends.

WHY?

By law, Children's Services have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and ensure that children privately fostered are being cared for safely and their needs are being met. We may also, in certain cases, be able to offer the carer help in the form of support and services.



When is a child a privately fostered child?

A privately fostered child is any child that is under the age of 16 (18 if the child is disabled) and who is cared for, and provided with accommodation by someone who is not a close relative or who has no parental responsibility for them.

A child is privately fostered if he or she has been cared for, or it is intended that he or she will be cared for, for a period of more than 28 days.

A child is **not** privately fostered if a parent of his or her or a close relative or someone with parental responsibility is living in the same premises.

A child is **not** privately fostered if he or she is being looked after by the Local Authority Children's Services Directorate.

A child is **not** privately fostered if he or she is placed for adoption, or is in accommodation provided by voluntary organisations, hospitals or schools.

Further information about exemptions from private fostering can be obtained at your local Children's Services Office.

By answering the following questions you should be helped in deciding whether or not you are already or intend to become a private foster carer.

Read the first question and depending on whether the answer is Yes or No, follow the arrows until one of the **RED** boxes is reached.

