

Will I be able to talk about how I feel?

Whilst you are living with your private foster carer there will be regular meetings with you, your private foster carer and a social worker. These meetings talk about your wellbeing and are an important part of helping us decide with you about what is best for you.

You will also be given the opportunity to talk to the social worker alone so that you can talk about anything you feel concerned about or need that is not provided for. These are some things you may want to think about before your social worker comes to visit you:

- What makes you happy about living in the private foster carer home?
- Is there anything that you're worried about?
- Is there anything which you would like to change?
- Is there anything which you would like your social worker to talk to your parent or carers about?



If you think you are being privately fostered and don't already have an allocated worker from children's social care, please call one of the following phone numbers or speak to a member of staff at your school or college:

If you live in Leicestershire

Please email childrensduty@leics.gov.uk
or call the First Response Team
on **0116 305 0005**

If you live in Rutland

Please email childrensreferrals@rutland.gov.uk
or call **01572 758407**

If you live in Leicester City

Please call the Duty and Advice Team
on **0116 454 1004**
or email das.team@leicester.gov.uk

Contact Numbers:

My Social Worker's name is...

Their phone number is...

Other useful telephone numbers...

PRIVATE FOSTERING

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S GUIDE



Are you
being looked
after by someone
who is not a
close family
member?

If so, here's what you need
to know about this...

What is Private Fostering?

Sometimes your own family, your mum or dad or the person who cares for you all the time, asks someone else to look after you for a while, or you may have chosen to stay with someone you know.

If you are likely to stay in this person's home for 28 days or more the law says that this is called private fostering. The person who looks after you is called the private foster carer. You are not on your own, there are many other children who are privately fostered around the country and in your own local area.

If you are being privately fostered then the local children's social care service must be told about this, because it is their job to make sure that you are properly cared for. The children's social care service will allocate you a social worker, who will visit you regularly to check that the private fostering arrangement still meets your needs. Your private foster carer may also have their own social worker. Your social worker will be able to offer you help, support and advice whilst you are being privately fostered.

The regulations for private fostering and those relating to the 'Homes for Ukraine' and associated sponsorship schemes, differ slightly. If necessary, please discuss this with your allocated social care worker or with children's social care services – this leaflet provides information about private fostering situations as opposed to situations where children have come to the UK from the Ukraine.

Who is responsible for me?

Your parent, parents, or carers with legal responsibilities for you, are still responsible for you whilst you are being privately fostered. If you were living with a carer or another family member who are legally responsible for you, they will continue to be responsible for you whilst you are being privately fostered. This means that they still have the responsibility for making all the important decisions in your life.

The law also says that it is important that your parents or carers who have legal responsibilities for you, try to stay in touch with you, and to visit, ring or write to you as often as they can whilst you are being privately fostered. Your parents or carers must check that you are being well cared for.

What will the private fostering social worker do to help?

The private fostering social worker will come to see where you live and will talk to both you and your private foster carers. They will also talk to your parents or carers who have legal responsibilities for you, to make sure that they know you are being well cared for.

What should my private foster carers do to care for me?

Your private foster carers must do all the everyday things for you that parents are expected to do for their own children such as:

- Help you stay in touch with your family
- Make sure you go to school so you can learn
- Make sure you have warm clean clothes and a bed of your own
- Give you regular meals - like breakfast, lunch and dinner
- Take you to the doctor or the hospital if you are sick or injured, or if you need vaccinations
- Take steps to make sure that your physical health and mental wellbeing is supported
- Take you to the dentist so your teeth are looked after properly and to an optician for your eyesight to be reviewed
- Make sure you have a chance to make friends and to enjoy sports and hobbies you like
- Make sure that your hair and skin are properly looked after
- Help you follow your religion and customs that are important to you and your family



Your private foster carers must not do the following, unless this has been agreed by your parents or carer who has legal responsibilities for you:

- Change your name
- Change your school
- Move you to another family
- Take you to another part of this country
- Take you overseas to another country
- If you need serious medical treatment, a parent or carer who has legal responsibilities for you will have to agree to this – unless it is an emergency, and your parents or carers cannot be contacted quickly enough, then a doctor will decide what to do.

What does being in private foster care mean for me?

The use of the term 'private fostering' can be confusing. private fostering does not mean that you are in foster care, what it means is that you are being cared for by someone who is not your parent or a close relative, in their home, and that you will have a social worker or support worker.

If you are being privately fostered, a worker from your local children's social care service, will visit you to make sure you are safe and well living with your private foster carers. The social worker will also check that your parent, parents, or carers with legal responsibilities know about the arrangement, and feel confident that your private foster carers are able to look after you properly, and understand their continued responsibilities, and that where you live is OK.

A social worker will visit you at least every six weeks during the first year that you live with private foster carers. After the first year this will change to at least once every three months, but you can always ask to see a social worker on your own at any time if you have something you need to talk about with them.