

If you become aware of a Private Fostering Arrangement, please complete a Safeguarding Referral; available on the Safeguarding Board website at: <http://calderdale-scb.org.uk> and post to:

The Duty Manager
First Response Team
Calderdale MBC
Northgate House
Northgate
HALIFAX
HX1 1UN

For more information, please call **01422 393336** or visit www.calderdale.gov.uk/socialcare/family/private-fostering

Private Fostering

Information for professionals



*Are you aware of
children living outside
their birth families?*

What is private fostering?

Private fostering is when a child or young person under 16 years of age (or under 18 if they have a disability) is looked after by someone who is not a close relative, guardian or person with parental responsibility for more than 28 days. However, if the child is living with an approved foster carer or if the arrangement was made by children's services, then this is not a private fostering arrangement.

A close relative includes:

- Grandparent
- Brother
- Sister
- Aunt and uncles (whether full blood or half blood or by affinity)
- Step parent



There are many reasons why people become private foster carers. They can be family friends or someone who is willing to look after the child of a family they do not know.

A private fostering arrangement may arise for several reasons:

- children and young people living apart from their family
- ethnic minority children whose parents are working or studying in the UK
- children whose parents are overseas
- children who are living with a host family for a variety of reasons
- children on holiday exchanges
- children on educational exchanges

Informing children's services of a private fostering arrangement

Professionals and other agencies are required to inform children's services when they become aware of a private fostering arrangement. This includes many professions who come into contact with children, for example, teachers, doctors, health visitors, religious leaders and nursery staff.

Professionals need to be aware that failure by a private foster carer or parent to notify the local authority of such arrangements is committing an offence. It also means that the local authority cannot carry out their duty to ensure the welfare of the child is safeguarded.

Informing the local authority of a private fostering arrangement is not breaking a confidence but is good practice in safeguarding.

Once notified of a private fostering arrangement, children's services will visit the premises where the child will be cared for and undertake an assessment. They will establish that the child's needs are being met, including education, health and cultural needs.

The local authority will also support the private foster carer.

Each privately fostered child/young person will have an individual private fostering placement agreement and care plan. The social worker will undertake regular visits to ensure that the child's needs are being continuously met and that they are being cared for in a safe and secure environment.

