

## What happens next?

In Slough, Slough Children First have a legal duty to make sure children are safe and well cared for.

If we think a private fostering arrangement is unsuitable, we will take action to safeguard the child's welfare.

This could be by getting the private foster carer to make improvements to their home to make it safer (like installing a smoke alarm), providing training or offering advice.

If the problems are more serious, unfortunately, your child might not be able to live with the private foster carers you had in mind and we will ask you to make more suitable arrangements.

We'll also let you know if we're happy with any arrangements.

It's important you give the private foster carer as much information as possible about your child like what food they eat, religion, medical needs, hobbies and education.

Even though the private foster carer will provide a home and day-to-day care for your child for a while, your parental responsibility doesn't change and you will still have contact with your child.



## Contact us

To let us know about a private fostering arrangement please contact our MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) Team on any of the following ways:



[Sloughchildren.referrals@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk](mailto:Sloughchildren.referrals@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk)



01753 875 362



The MASH Team, Slough Children First, Observatory House, 25 Windsor Road, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 2EL

## Translations and other formats

If you'd like this document translated or in another format please let us know.

## Complaints

If you have a private fostering arrangement, please talk to your social worker or their manager if you're unhappy about anything. If this doesn't help, you can contact the Complaints Manager on [01753 875825](tel:01753875825) or at [complaints@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk](mailto:complaints@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk)



# Private fostering

## A guide for parents



## What is private fostering?

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if they have a disability), goes to live with someone who is not a close relative for 28 days or more.

A close relative includes a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle or step-parent through marriage or civil partnership.

## Who can privately foster?

People who are not a close relative that can privately foster include:

- A great aunt/uncle;
- A Cousin;
- A friend of the family;
- A neighbour.



This isn't a complete list so if you are unsure please contact Slough Children First's MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) Team via tel on 01753 875362 or via email at:

[Sloughchildren.referrals@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk](mailto:Sloughchildren.referrals@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk)



## Examples of private fostering arrangements

There are many reasons why a child or young person might go into private foster care.

This includes:

- Their parent/guardian is ill and unable to look after them for a while;
- They aren't getting on with other family members living in the house;
- They want to stay with their boyfriend or girlfriend's family;
- Their parent/guardian's study involves unsociable hours which makes it difficult for them to use ordinary day care or after school care.

## Do I need to tell anyone about a private fostering arrangement?

Yes. The law requires that you tell your Local Authority at least six weeks before the arrangement begins, unless the arrangement is made in an emergency, which means you must tell them within 48 hours.

If your child is already in private foster care and you haven't said, don't worry you won't be in trouble but please let us know.

## What if anything changes?

Please let us know:

- If your child leaves their private fostering arrangement;
- The name and address of the new person who will now be caring for them if the arrangement changes;
- About any other significant changes.

## What can a private foster carer do or not do?

A private foster carer will be responsible for looking after your child, but they are not allowed to do any of the following without your consent:

- Change your child's name;
- Change your child's school;
- Take your child on holiday;
- Take your child to stay with another family.

