



# Private Fostering

Private fostering is defined in law as an arrangement that is made privately. That is to say without the involvement of the local authority.

It applies to the care of a child under the age of 16 (or under 18 if disabled) by someone **other than** a parent or close relative, with the intention it should last for 28 days or more.

A 'close relative' is a grandparent, brother, sister, aunt or uncle (whether of 'full blood' or 'half - blood' or by marriage) or step-parent.

A private foster carer is:

- Extended family e.g. a cousin or great aunt
- A friend of the family
- The parent of a friend of the child
- Someone unknown to the child's family

The period of care should be longer than 28 days and continuous, but this can be broken by occasional short breaks.

How is responsibility shared?

- The private foster carer is responsible for providing day-to-day care of the child and promoting & safeguarding the child's welfare
- Private foster carer's rights come from the voluntary agreement made with the parent
- Responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare remains with the person(s) with parental responsibility

**Research shows there are at least 10,000 children in Britain growing up in informal fostering arrangements unknown to local authorities. This can make them vulnerable to abuse – let Social services know via the contact details on this page.**

**The Children Act 1989 places a duty on parents, a person who proposes to privately foster a child and all professionals to notify the local authority of an intention to begin a private foster care arrangement immediately or within 6 weeks of it starting.**

**All notifications to the Local Authority should be made by ringing the service below and giving them all known relevant details of the child, their parents and the carers**

Barnsley Fostering Team  
01226 775876

**If unsure, ring the above number for advice**

**Useful resources:**

**Leaflet for Parents:**

<http://www.safeguardingchildrenbarnsley.com/private-fostering-leaflet-for-parentspdf>

**Leaflet for Carers:**

[http://www.safeguardingchildrenbarnsley.com/0xac1600b\\_0x0054978b](http://www.safeguardingchildrenbarnsley.com/0xac1600b_0x0054978b)

**Leaflet for Children:**

[http://www.safeguardingchildrenbarnsley.com/0xac1600b\\_0x0054978a](http://www.safeguardingchildrenbarnsley.com/0xac1600b_0x0054978a)

**Useful Websites:**

- Private Fostering, British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) at:  
<http://www.baaf.org.uk/info/private-fostering>
- 'Somebody Else's Child' Campaign, BAAF, at:  
<http://www.privatefostering.org.uk/public>
- Fostering Information Line, at:  
[http://www.fostering.org.uk/information/private\\_fostering.html](http://www.fostering.org.uk/information/private_fostering.html)