

FACTS 4 U 2: Private fostering Private Fostering Information for Children, Families and Carers

This fact sheet can be made available in other languages or formats on request by contacting 0161 770 6666. For further information please see our detailed fact sheet - Information for all.

It is the Local Authority in whose area the Private Fostered child resides who has the legal duties in respect of that child

What is private fostering?

Most children spend some time staying with friends and relatives. However, in some situations the arrangements can become more permanent.

If a child aged under 16 years (or 18 years if disabled) goes to live with a person who is not a close relative to them (e.g. a great aunt or a friend) for more than 28 days or more, this is known as private fostering, and special rules apply.

If you are looking after a child and think you could be a private foster carer, or you are the parent of a child in this situation, you must inform the Children Assessment Team (0161 770 3790/1).

Why involve the Children Assessment Team?

The 1989 Children Act gives the Children Assessment Team a legal duty to make sure that any child under 16 years (18 years if disabled) who is living for long periods with unrelated adults is:

- Well looked after
- Healthy
- Receiving a proper education
- Living with someone who can keep alive their own identity and background
- Kept in contact with people important to them
- Given encouragement to develop and grow to their full potential
- Properly supported when they move into independence

What will the Children Assessment Team do?

A social worker will arrange to visit the child's parents, the private foster carers and the child themselves.

They will keep in touch at regular intervals with the private foster carers, the child's parent, and the child, to make sure everything is going well.

They will offer support and guidance to both the foster cares and parents, particularly making plans for the child's future and helping the child to keep in touch with their culture and background.

The social worker will also offer advice on the welfare benefits the private foster carers may be entitled to.

Parents' rights and responsibilities

When a child goes to live with private foster parents, the child's parents keep all legal rights and responsibilities.

This means the parent should be:

- Involved in the planning of the child's future
- Kept in touch with the child's future
- Involved in any decision made affecting their child
- Able to have their child home with them at any time if they wish
- Expected to financially support their child

How to make a complaint or compliment?

If you would like to make a complaint or compliment about our services please contact the Complaints and Representations Officer.

Telephone: 0161 770 1129

Fax: 0161 770 3222

E-mail: cypf.complaints@oldham.gov.uk

Address: Freepost, Children Young People and Families, Complaints and Representations Officer, Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, PO BOX 4, Civic Centre, Level 8, West Street, Oldham, OL1 1UL

Opening Hours: 0900 to 1700 Mon-Fri

Want to know more?

If you want to know more about private fostering or you think you may be acting or intend to act as a private foster parent, please contact Children Assessment Team at the following address:

Royton Town Hall
Rochdale Road
Royton
Oldham
Tel: 0161 911 3790/1

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