

Many people look after other people's children for a night or a weekend. But if a child is living with someone who is not their immediate relative for more than 28 days, it may mean that child is being privately fostered.



The Children Act 2004 requires parents and private foster carers to inform Children's Services about the children they are caring for before the arrangement begins, or immediately if the arrangement happened suddenly.

Bath & North East  
Somerset Council

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This publication about fostering can be made available in a range of community languages, large print, braille, on tape, electronic and accessible formats from the Family Placement Team.

# Private Fostering

**A guide for children and young people**

**What you need  
to know!**



**Is someone other than your parent caring for you?**

Bath & North East  
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**featuring  
super**



**social workers**



Private Fostering

## Are you being privately fostered?

If you need to stay with someone who is not your close relative for a period of 28 days or longer then this is private fostering. The person who looks after you is a private foster carer and the law states that we must be told about the arrangement as it is our job to make sure you are looked after properly. Once the local authority have been told then you will have

- ◆ Your mum or dad is ill and cannot look after you so you stay with a neighbour or family friend
- ◆ You have been sent to this country by your mum or dad who is not living here
- ◆ You need to be cared for because your mum or dad's job means they cannot be around all the time
- ◆ You are studying at a language school and live with a host family or guardian
- ◆ You are a teenager who prefers to stay with your friends family due to there being problems in your own home.

## Why might children be privately fostered?

There can be lots of reasons why children are privately fostered. It may be that:



## Is private fostering different from foster care?

**Yes. When you are privately fostered social workers do not arrange where you live but they do have to go and make sure you are safe and well cared for. Foster care is different- it is arranged by social workers when children can't live at home and this is called being 'looked after' or was previously called being 'in care'.**



## What should my private foster carers do for me?

The people you live with should look after you like their own child. They should:

Make sure you have your own bed and clean clothes  
Make sure you see a doctor and dentist when you need to

Make sure you go to school

Give you regular meals

Help you stay in touch with family



Encourage and support your interests and hobbies

Help you to follow any customs or religious beliefs that you choose to follow



## What will my social worker do for me?

A social worker helps children and young people and their families. They make sure that children are safe and looked after properly.

You should see a social worker within a week of the local authority being notified that you are privately fostered. After that your social worker will come and see you every six weeks.

They will want to meet with you on your own to give you a chance to discuss your circumstances. You should tell them anything that is worrying you so they can help you. They are a safe person to share your feelings with.



## What will my family do for me?

Your family are still responsible for you and should stay in contact with you. They have to give permission for certain things to happen such as:

- \* Changing your name
- \* Taking you out of the country
- \* Moving you to another family
- \* Changing your school