

May 2018

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL

Dear Sir/ Madam

Re: Private Fostering Awareness

I am writing you on behalf of the City of Wolverhampton Fostering Team. Our aim is to promote awareness and understanding of the notification process for Private Fostering to both professionals and members of the public. This is a regulated activity that will ensure that privately fostered children are known to the Local Authority and their welfare is safeguarded and promoted.

The 2005 Private Fostering Regulations are made under the Children Act 1989. The National Minimum Standards are issued under section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, which requires local authorities in their social services functions to act under the general guidance of the Secretary of State.

Standard 2 of the Private Fostering Regulations concerns the Local Authorities duty to promote awareness of private fostering and the notification process. A private fostering arrangement is essentially one that is made privately (that is to say without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. Private foster carers may be from the extended family such as a cousin or great aunt. However, a person who is a relative under the Children Act 1989 i.e. a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of full blood or half blood or by marriage) or step-parent will not be a private foster carer. A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child, or someone previously unknown to the child's family who is willing to privately foster a child.

The period for which the child is cared for and accommodated by the private foster carer should be continuous, but the concept of continuity is not considered broken by the occasional short break.

We appreciate you support in displaying this information in a prominent position within your establishment. This will inevitably work towards keeping children in our communities safe.

Should you require any additional resources or information please feel free to contact us on 01902 553041.

Yours sincerely,

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Caring for someone else's child?

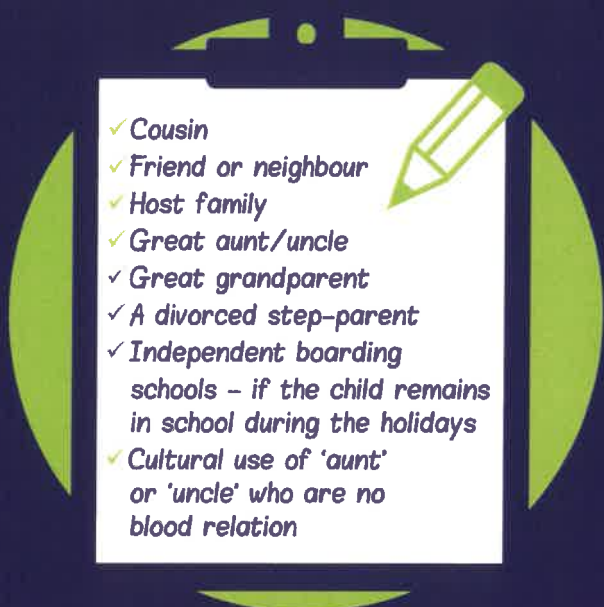
Private Fostering What you need to know



A privately fostered child is defined as:

“ A child under 16 (or under 18 with a disability) living with a person who is not a parent, close relative (sibling, aunt, uncle, step-parent or grandparent) or legal guardian for 28 days or more without the involvement of City of Wolverhampton Council. ”

This simple checklist will help to identify private fostering arrangements.

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- ✓ Cousin
 - ✓ Friend or neighbour
 - ✓ Host family
 - ✓ Great aunt/uncle
 - ✓ Great grandparent
 - ✓ A divorced step-parent
 - ✓ Independent boarding schools – if the child remains in school during the holidays
 - ✓ Cultural use of 'aunt' or 'uncle' who are no blood relation

City of Wolverhampton Council has a legal requirement to ensure these children are supported and to check on the suitability of the adults caring for them. We can help to provide suitable support for the carer and the child. Private foster carers cannot consent to decisions affecting a child's health or education. The law says that the council must be informed of these arrangements and so **individuals are not breaching confidentiality by notifying us.**

Birth parents retain all their parental responsibility for privately fostered children, not the carers.

Please contact the Central Referral Hub on **01902 555392** if you think you know of a child who resides in a private fostering situation or if you have any concerns for a child's welfare.

To access the Private Fostering e-learning module which can be used to train your staff, email wscbtraining@wolverhampton.gov.uk

For more information, visit www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/privatefostering

We all Care



Get
in touch

**Do you know a
child who is being
cared for by
someone who is
not a parent or
close relative?**

City of Wolverhampton Council has a legal responsibility to support children and we can provide specialist guidance to the carer.

If you know of a child who is in a private fostering arrangement, please get in touch by calling **01902 555392**.

For more information, visit
www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/privatefostering