



# ONE MINUTE GUIDE: Private Fostering

## What is Private Fostering?

Private Fostering is a private arrangement made by a child's parent (or someone with parental responsibility) for the child to live with someone who is not a close relative (grandparent, sibling, biological uncle or aunt, or step-parent by marriage or civil partnership). Private Fostering only applies to a child under 16 years, or under 18 years if the child is disabled. If the arrangement is expected to last more than 28 days, it becomes a Private Fostering arrangement, and you must notify the Local Authority. Privately Fostered children are not in the care of the Local Authority.

## The Role of Parents

All those with parental responsibility have a legal duty to notify the Local Authority of the details of the Private Fostering arrangement. This should be carried out prior to making the Private Fostering arrangement or as soon as the arrangement starts.

## Parental Responsibility

When a child lives in a Private Fostering arrangement, the child's parents keep all legal rights and retain their parental responsibility for the child. They are expected to continue to financially support their child. Parents must be:

- Involved in planning the child's future.
- Kept in touch about the child's progress.
- Involved in any decisions made about the child.

Parents can end a Private Fostering arrangement at any point.

## The Role of Partner Agencies

Education colleagues, Health Workers, Police, social workers, volunteers and other professionals may become aware of Private Fostering arrangements due to their contact with children and families. Professionals from all agencies have a legal duty to notify the Local Authority if they become aware of or believe that a child is living in a Private Fostering arrangement.

## The role of the Local Authority

The Local Authority has a legal duty to make sure Privately Fostered children are safe and well. Where they are informed of a proposed or existing Private Fostering arrangement, a social worker will make an initial visit and will then assess the suitability of the arrangements and the need for any additional help and support.

## Who do I contact to notify of a private fostering arrangement?

The York Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 01904 551900

Email: [MASH@york.gov.uk](mailto:MASH@york.gov.uk)

Please use the [MASH Referral Form](#)

## Where can I get further information about Private Fostering?

The statutory guidance for local authorities on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Privately Fostered children: [National minimum standards for Private Fostering](#)

### Where do I go for further information?

Please visit the [CYSCP website](#) for up to date information and latest news.

Please also sign up to the [CYSCP Newsletter](#) and follow us on Twitter [@YorkSCP](#)

