



## Who looks after you?

Essential facts about private fostering  
A guide for children and young people



## Who do you live with?

Are you living with someone who isn't your parent or a close relative?

A close relative means – grandparent, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, step-parent, legal guardian or other person with parental responsibility.

Are you under 16 years old? Or under 18 years if you are disabled?

Are you going to be living there for more than 27 days?

If you have said yes to these questions then (unless you live with a local authority foster carer) you are living in a private fostering arrangement.



## What is private fostering?

There may be many reasons why your mum, dad or guardian might need to ask someone they trust to look after you.

Maybe your parents need to go into hospital for a long period of time, or are going to be living abroad.

The person who they may ask might not be a close relative – it may be a friend of theirs, or a distant relative, such as your mum's auntie or your dad's cousin, or someone similar.

Your mum, dad or guardian will not usually do this without a great deal of thought. It is important that your mum, dad or guardian have discussed why they want someone to look after you and what arrangements should be made for you in case you get ill, have any problems at school, or need any special help.

We are here to help you, your parents and your private foster carer so that you get the advice, support and information that you need, and most of all, to make sure that you are safe and well looked after.



## What do you need to do?

Your mum, dad or the people you are living with (your carers) should have told us at Children's Services that you are going to be looked after by someone else, no matter what the reason is.

There is a rule that says we must be told if you are in private foster care, and the rule is there so that everyone can be sure that you are safe and being looked after properly. If the Children's Service isn't told about the arrangements, your parents or carers could get into trouble.

Why don't you ask your mum, dad or carers if they have told us or not? And if they haven't, tell them to phone 01226 775876 as soon as they can and explain what's happening.

## What will happen then?

It's our job to make sure you are being cared for properly and that you get any help you may need for your health, education and happiness. We wouldn't want you to be sad or unhappy, or have any problems and not have anyone to help you to sort it out.

To do this, one of our staff, a social worker from the fostering team, will visit you and the people you are living with (your private foster carers) and we will contact your parents to make sure they are happy with all the arrangements too.

## What will we ask you?

Our social worker will have a chat with you and ask you a few questions – nothing too hard, just things like:

- Are you happy where you are living?
- Is it the best arrangement for you?
- Is the house safe and suitable?
- Are your parents staying in touch with you?
- Are you from a different ethnic or cultural background than your carers?
- Do you need help with this?
- Do you have any religious beliefs which you want help to carry on with?

We just want to make sure you are safe and happy... and that you can tell us if you have any worries about how you are being looked after.

The social worker will also talk with your carers to make sure that they have the help they may need to look after you.

## Then what happens?

When our social worker has talked with you and your carers, your mum, dad, and maybe your school teacher or doctor, they will write up all that has been talked about in a special report. The report will be all about you, what your needs are, and how your carers can make sure your needs are met.

The social worker needs to make sure that your private foster carers are suitable people for you to be living with and that they will look after you properly.

The social worker will give the report to their team manager, who will decide whether the place you are living in is safe and suitable for you. The social worker will make sure that you, your carer, and your mum or dad know what is decided about this.



## What happens if the manager says everything is OK?

If the manager is happy with the report then you will carry on living with your carers as planned, but we will want to keep an eye on things to make sure you are OK.

The social worker will call to see you at least every six weeks for the first year you live with your carer. You can ask them to visit more often if you need help or advice. They will talk with your carer too, but will want to have chance to speak with you on your own as well.

The social worker's job is to make sure you are safe, healthy, happy, doing well at school or college and that your needs are met. They will want to make sure that you have good contact with your mum or dad, or other members of your family. If you have any worries about these things you should talk things over with the social worker.



## What if our manager thinks you are not in the best care?

If where you are living is not felt to be safe or a good place for you to live, the social worker will talk with you about what you want and what else would be best.

This could be that:

- You go back to live with your mum or dad with help from us
- You go to live with another relative
- You go to live with foster carers that we could provide for you

## What should you do if you are not happy with something?



If you have worries of any kind – perhaps about your health, about school, anything at all that concerns you – you should talk with your mum or dad, your carer, or your social worker.

If there are things that you are not happy with about your carer, or feel that you can't talk with them about something that is worrying you, you should tell your mum or dad, or your social worker.

If you are having any problems with your social worker, you do have a right to make a complaint. You can complain by contacting the Children's Complaints Manager who is Jacqueline Taylor, at :-

2nd Floor  
Wellington House  
Wellington St, Barnsley S70 1WA

Tel: 01226 772433

Email:

[socialservicescomplaints@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:socialservicescomplaints@barnsley.gov.uk)

Mobile text message to: 07786 525880

You can also ask the Complaints Manager to send you a form which you can fill in and return. The postage is pre-paid. When she receives your complaint, the Complaints Manager will arrange to visit you to talk about your complaint and she will explain what happens next. Someone will look into your complaint and you will get an answer within 14 days. If you are not happy with the answer you get, you need to let the Complaints Manager know and she will talk to you about what else can be done.

If you are being bullied, which means that someone is picking on you, getting into fights with you, getting you into trouble, calling you names, stealing your things, or doing things to make you unhappy or scared, you should tell your mum or dad,

your foster carer, social worker, or teacher straight away. We have a policy about bullying in Barnsley and we will make sure that any bullying stops.

An inspector from OFSTED inspects the work of the fostering service in Barnsley and if you want to let the inspector know about difficulties with the service you feel you are getting, or want to have a say about things about the service that affect you, you can contact them at:-

Ofsted  
3rd Floor  
Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Anne's Square, Manchester M2 7LA  
Tel. 08456 404040

Useful website addresses are:

[www.rights4me.org](http://www.rights4me.org) – this is linked to OFSTED and the Children's Rights Director who works to make things better for children everywhere, but also has a special interest in making sure that children living away from home are looked after properly.

[www.safeguardingchildrenbarnsley.com](http://www.safeguardingchildrenbarnsley.com) – this Barnsley website gives lots of information for children and young people about how children should be kept safe and well, and about how to contact someone if this isn't happening.

## What should you do if things change in your home?

Your carers must tell us if something changes –

- If you move house and change your address
- If someone moves into your house or moves out
- If anyone living in your house gets into trouble with the police or commits an offence
- If your carers' financial situation changes – if they lost their job or get a new job

## What happens when you go back to live with your parents?

When the time comes for things to change back to what they were, your mum, dad and carers will agree when this will happen, and they will let you and your social worker know. This could be quite upsetting for you when you have got used to living with your carers, especially if this has been for quite a while. Your social worker will be involved with all of you, to help you with the move.

The Children's Young People and Families Service can provide you with more information if you contact them.

They can also provide you with help and support if you are not happy with your situation.

Call 01226 775876 to speak with the social worker from the Fostering Team.

Nëse j'u nevojitet ndihmë për të kuptuar këtë dokument, j'u lutemi n'a kontaktoni.

若您需要幫助來理解本檔，請與我們聯繫。

यदि आप को इस दस्तावेज़ को समझने के लिए सहायता की आवश्यकता है तो कृपया हम से संपर्क करें

Jeżeli potrzebujesz pomocy w zrozumieniu tego dokumentu skontaktuj się z nami

ਜੇਕਰ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਲਈ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਮਦਦ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ

Обратитесь к нам, если для того, чтобы понять этот документ, вам нужна помощь

اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز کو سمجھنے کیلئے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو براہ کرم ہم سے رابطہ کریں

If you need help understanding this document please contact us on 01226 775876.