



PRIVATE FOSTERING

INFORMATION SHEET

What is Private Fostering?

A privately fostered child is a child under 16 (or 18 if disabled) who is cared for by an adult who is not a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, step parent, sister or brother where the child is to be cared for in that person's home for 28 days or more

What are the legal requirements Local Authority responsibilities?

The legal background comes from Part 9 of and Schedule 8 of the Children Act 1989 which have been amended by Section 44 of the Children Act 2004. The relevant regulations are the children (Private Arrangement for fostering) Regulations 2005.

Private fostering is defined by the Children Act as an arrangement for a child to be looked after for more than 27 days in the home of someone who is not a parent, guardian or relative. If the child is living with any other relative, then this will be a private fostering arrangement if it lasts for more than 27 consecutive days.

Private fostering arrangements are made directly between the parent and the foster carer. The child does not become looked after and the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child, and supporting the child financially, stays with the parent. The child may or may not be a child in need; this will depend on the individual circumstances.

The Local Authority do **not** approve or register private foster carers. Placements cannot be prevented unless the person is disqualified or a prohibition is imposed. The Local Authority cannot remove the child except under an Emergency Protection Order. The role of the Local Authority is:

- To satisfy itself about the child's welfare
- To receive notifications from parents, carers and third parties
- To visit the child regularly
- To offer advice and support
- To promote awareness within their area of the information requirement

A guidance flowchart is detailed on the back of this information leaflet to guide practitioners in identifying private fostering arrangements.

What do you need to do if you identify a private fostering arrangement?

- It is the responsibility of the person (professional or public) who becomes aware of private fostering arrangement to notify the Local Authority of a private fostering arrangement.

Local Authority responsible contact for private fostering

Samantha Addison, head of Service, Safeguarding Services, Middlesbrough Council is the lead officer for private fostering, should you require advice, guidance or support regarding private fostering or to discuss identification of an arrangement please contact:

Samantha Addison, Service Manager
Tel No: 01642 513601

Flowchart for use when a child is living with someone other than a parent

