



London Borough
of Hounslow

Our responsibility

The law requires us to:

- Check that private foster carers are suitable to care for children
- Check that children are being well cared for
- Impose any requirements thought necessary
- Offer relevant advice to the carer, child and their parent

We do this by

- Visiting the private foster carer and discussing the childcare arrangements you have made with them
- Checking the suitability of the carer's accommodation
- Taking up references such as checking police records on the carer and other members of their household
- Meeting with the child to ascertain their wishes and feelings

Hounslow Family Placement Service
Civic Centre
Blue Zone
Lampton Road
Hounslow TW3 4DN
020 8583 3426

Fostering.Duty@hounslow.gov.uk
www.hounslow.gov.uk/privatefostering

Private Fostering

A guide to the law
for birth parents and
others with parental
responsibility





Private fostering information for carers

If you are considering having your child looked after by someone else it is important that you are aware of the legal responsibilities involved in making these arrangements.

What is private fostering?

Private fostering is a private agreement between a parent and another adult to care for a child or young person for 28 days or more in their home.

It only applies to children under 16, or 18 if the young person is disabled. It applies if a child is being cared for by someone who is not their:

Parent, grandparent, brother/sister, aunt/uncle, legal guardian, or any other person with parental responsibility whether related by full blood, half blood, marriage or civil partnership.

Common examples of private fostering arrangements

- Children and young people who are sent to this country for education or health care by their birth parents from overseas
- Children or young people whose parents work or study long and/or antisocial hours
- Children or young people who are living with a friend's family as a result of parental separation, divorce or difficulties at home
- A teenager living with the family of a boyfriend or girlfriend

What must I do if my child is being or will be looked after by someone else?

The law requires that you tell your Local Authority at least **six weeks** before the arrangement begins that you intend for somebody to privately foster your child, unless the arrangement is made in an emergency, in which case the notification must be made within **48 hours**.

If you live in Hounslow, you should notify Children's Services on 020 8583 3426.

What information do I need to give the private foster carer?

Make sure you provide the private foster carer with all relevant information about your child, e.g. health, education, religion, culture, hobbies, etc.

This will enable the private foster carer to provide the best possible care for your child. A private fostering arrangement does not mean that you are giving up your rights to your child. This is a temporary arrangement and you still have parental responsibility and will continue to be involved in all decisions about your child's life.