



# Private Fostering

## What is it?

**Private fostering is where a private arrangement has been made by the child's parent (or someone with parental responsibility) to live with a carer who is not a close relative of a child under the age of 16 (or if the child is disabled).**

If the parent places their child with a grandparent, brother or sister, aunt or uncle (by blood or marriage) or a step-parent this is not a private fostering arrangement.

### **Examples of children who might be privately fostered:**

- Children staying with a friend of the family because of parents separation, divorce or problems at home
- Children staying with extended family such as a cousin or great aunt
- Children sent to this country for education or health care by birth family living overseas
- Teenagers living with family of a boyfriend or girlfriend

- Children whose parents work or study involves unsociable hours which makes it difficult for them to use ordinary day care or afterschool care
- Teenagers who have broken ties with their parents and are staying with friends
- Children living with host families whilst pursuing courses of study
- Children receiving respite care provided by someone other than a relative

This arrangement must be longer than 28 days. Private fostering is not arranged or paid for by Bolton Children's Services.

### **My child is privately fostered or I am thinking about private fostering what should I do?**

You need to let Bolton Children's Services know as soon as possible. It would be best if this was at least six weeks before your child goes to live with the private foster carer. If the arrangement is made in an emergency you need to let us know within 48 hours.

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## What will Children's Services do?

The Children Act 1989 places a legal duty on local authorities to protect and promote the welfare of privately fostered children, to check that the arrangements for the child/ren are safe and that the child/ren are well cared for. Section 44 of the Children Act 2004 extended these duties to include children who are proposed to be, but not yet, privately fostered. The duties are set out in the Children (Private arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005.

Bolton Children's Services will put the child first and work with parents and carers to make sure the arrangement is right for the child. Bolton Children's Services will need to undertake an assessment of the circumstances and be satisfied that the arrangement is safe and secure for the child.

**They will make sure children are safe and happy with the arrangement.**

## They will make sure the carers are:

- Trustworthy – they will check police records on the carer and members of the household
- Able to provide a home that is safe for your child
- Are supported to care for your child if necessary
- Able to look after your child's physical, emotional, educational and cultural needs

## Key contact and for more information...

Children's Services Tel: **01204 331500**

Please contact Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership at [www.boltonsafeguardingchildren.org.uk](http://www.boltonsafeguardingchildren.org.uk)

Tel: **01204 337479**

Email [boltonsafeguardingchildren@bolton.gov.uk](mailto:boltonsafeguardingchildren@bolton.gov.uk)

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**Bolton Council**