

Going to live with people who are not close family

Information for young people

If you are under 16, or 18 if you are disabled, and your parents have asked someone else to look after you (who is not a close relative) for more than 28 days then this is called **Private Fostering**.

The person who looks after you is called a private foster carer, and you will have a Social Worker and Fostering Worker to support you while you live with them.



Why do Social Services need to know that I am being privately fostered?

The law says that if you are being privately fostered, your parents or your private foster carer must tell Social Services. This is because we need to make sure you are safe and well cared for. You will be visited regularly to make sure you are happy and we will see you on your own to make sure you are OK.



What should it be like living with private foster carers?

Private foster carers should look after you as if you were one of their own children. They should do everything that a parent should do, such as making sure you are well cared for, that you attend school and that you are seen by a doctor if you are not well.

You should also be given the opportunity to enjoy the hobbies or activities that you enjoy. Your private foster carers should also respect the things that are important to you such as your religion and customs.



Who is responsible for me?

Your parents are still responsible for you even if you go to live with private foster carers. This means your parents should remain involved in making important decisions about you and your care.

Can I still see my family and my friends?



Your parents and the private foster carers should make arrangements for you to see your family and friends. You can also keep in touch by phone, text, email or by writing letters.

How often will I see my workers?

You will be visited at least every six weeks during the first year that you are living with your private foster carer. After the first year the visits may not be so often but you can still ask to see them if you have something you want to talk about.

You can phone either your Social Worker or Fostering Worker if you need to talk to them about anything. They will also keep in contact with your private foster carer and your parents to see if everything is ok and to check to see if they need any help, advice or support.

What if I am not happy?

If you have a problem, or are not happy with where you are living you should talk to your Social Worker or Fostering Worker. If needed they will talk to your private foster carer and your parents to see what can be done to sort out the problem.

You could also talk to a teacher or another adult you know and trust. If you find it easier to talk to someone you don't know you could phone or email Childline.

Childline 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

Free and confidential helpline. You can ring Childline and talk to someone about any problems you may have.

Southend Fostering Service

01702 212938

or: 215007 to ask for your Social Worker or Fostering Worker



This document is published by the Department of People Southend-on-Sea Borough Council.
A summary of this leaflet can be translated into alternative languages and can be provided in other formats.

Please phone 01702 215007

www.southend.gov.uk

November 2013

