

## What will Children's Services do?

Dudley Council has a legal duty to ensure any child or young person is in a suitable and safe private fostering arrangement.

- A social worker will arrange to visit and speak to a carer and other members of the household in their own home within seven working days of notification. They will also speak to the child and visit the parents where possible.
- A social worker will visit regularly to make sure the child remains safe and well cared for.


For further information and advice  
or to make a referral contact:

Tel: 0300 555 0050 option 4

Email: [mash\\_referrals@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:mash_referrals@dudley.gov.uk)

# Private FOSTERING

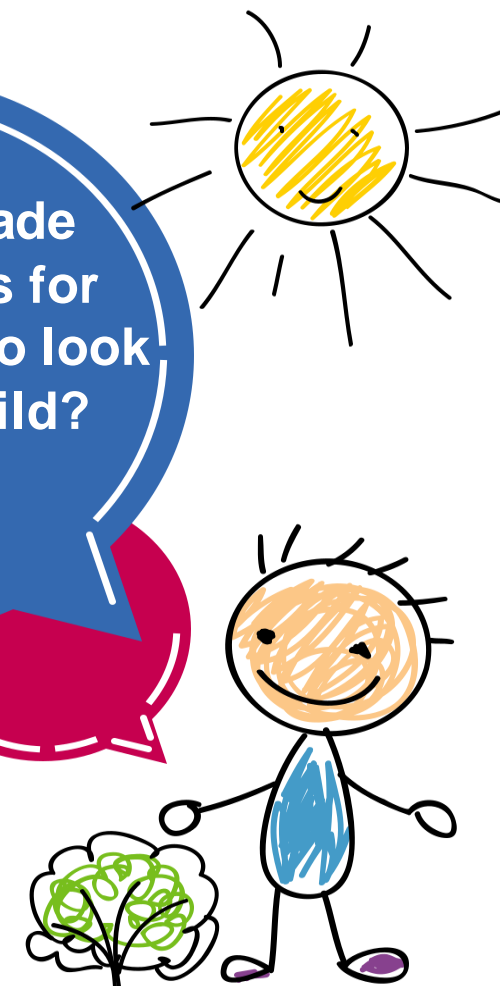
Information for parents and carers



Have you made  
arrangements for  
someone else to look  
after your child?



Are you  
looking after  
someone  
else's child?



[www.fosteringindudley.org.uk](http://www.fosteringindudley.org.uk)



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## What is private fostering?

- The law states that if a child under the age of 16 (18 if they have a disability) lives with someone who is not a close relative for 28 days or more, this is known as private fostering.
- It is a private agreement between a parent and another adult. Private foster carers may be from the extended family, such as a cousin or great aunt, a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child or someone previously unknown to the child's family (such as a host family).
- It is not private fostering when a child is living with a close relative such as a parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether blood relative or through marriage).

## Examples of private fostering arrangements

- Children or young people who are sent to this country for education or health care by their birth parents from overseas.
- Teenagers living with a friend's family because they do not get on with their own family.
- Children living with a friend's family because their parent's study or work involves unsociable hours, which makes it difficult to use ordinary day care or after school care.
- Children staying with another family because their parents have divorced or separated.
- A child from overseas staying with a host family while attending school or overseas students at boarding school who stay with a host family during the holidays.



## What should I do if I intend to foster my child privately?

You must tell Dudley Council's Children's Services at least six weeks before or, if it is an emergency arrangement contact the council within 48 hours of your child being privately fostered.

- You need to provide the private foster carer with information about your child, including their health and school history, their interests, religion and dietary needs etc.
- Please remember that you will retain parental responsibility for your child throughout the time they are privately fostered. You should ensure that you participate in all the major decisions concerning your child and their care.

## What should I do if I am looking after someone else's child or am considering doing so?

- You must tell Dudley Council's Children's Services at least 6 weeks before a child comes to live with you
- You must tell Dudley Council's Children's Services within 48 hours of the child coming to live with you if the arrangement is made in an emergency.
- If a child is already living with you, and you have not told Dudley Council's Children's Services already, you must do so immediately.
- If a private fostering arrangement is going to end you must tell Dudley Council's Children's Services at least 48 hours before the child leaves your care. You'll also need to tell them where the child is going to live next.

