

www.islington.gov.uk



Are you looking after someone else's child in Islington?

A guide for private foster carers



What is private fostering?

Private fostering is an arrangement where a child or young person under the age of 16 (or under 18 if they are disabled) is looked after full time for more than 28 days by an adult who is not a close relative such as a

- friend
- cousin

The arrangement is made between the child's parents and the private foster carer whose responsibility is the day to day care of the child.



Some common examples of private fostering

Private fostering often occurs where;

- A teenager who isn't getting on with their parents goes to live with a friend's family.
- Parents pay someone to care for their children while they are away working or studying.
- Children are sent from abroad to live with other families in the UK.
- Children are sent to this country for education or health care by birth parents who live in another country.
- Children are placed with a family friend or relative as a result of parental separation, divorce, arguments at home, or a parent being hospitalised.

What should I do if I am caring for a child of a friend or extended family member or if this is likely to happen?

Life is full of different pressures, particularly for parents. Sometimes these pressures lead to children being looked after away from their immediate family.

The Islington Children's Social Care Team needs to ensure that the child is safe and the best possible arrangements are in place for their care. The team can also support the child to remain in or return to their birth family.

To do this we need your help. If you are currently caring for someone else's child or have been asked to do so then call us on **020 7527 7400**.



What support can we offer?

If a family is considering a private fostering arrangement we can advise them about the best way to go about organising the private fostering arrangement. We can also look at other options like providing families with more support including child care, school holiday activities, and family mediation to give the family a break and reduce tensions in the home so the child or young person can remain within the immediate family.

Some examples of the support we can provide;

- An allocated person who can discuss the specific needs of the child.
- Information on after-school, weekend and holiday activities.
- Befriending and Mentoring.
- Signposting to legal advice, drug and alcohol services and a range of local family support services.
- We can also help parents and private foster carers deal with difficult behaviour with the child and practical provide support when children return home.



The next step....

Contact:

Islington Children's Social Care Referral and Advice Team
222 Upper Street
Islington
N1 1RX

Call 020 7527 7400

Open 9.00am until 5pm

A member of staff will arrange a meeting with you and the child you are looking after.

Legal information

Parents and carers are legally responsible for their children and must be involved in the planning and decision making processes of the private fostering arrangement. Parents must tell us about a private fostering arrangement 6 weeks before it is due to start. If the child has already been placed parents must notify us about the arrangements immediately if the private foster carer has not already done so. They can do this by calling our Referral and Advice Team on **020 7527 7400**.

You can find out more about the legal position about private fostering on the Department of Health website at www.doh.gov.uk, the British Association of Fostering and Adoption on www.baaf.org.uk or telephone

If you have come across a family who are considering privately fostering their child or a child who is already in a privately fostered arrangement then either telephone us on **020 7527 7400** or complete the form below and send it to;

The Referral and Advice Team 222 Upper Street Islington N1 1RX
or email cscreferrals@islington.gov.uk

Name of child/ren

Date of birth

Home (family) address

Postcode

Private fostering address

Postcode

Telephone number:

Home

Work

Mobile

Email

Signed

Date

If you would like this document in large print or Braille, audiotape or in another language, please contact 020 7527 2000.

Contact Islington

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London N1 1XR

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