

## What are foster carers' responsibilities?

People intending to be foster carers must:

- Inform the City of London's Children and Families Team of their intention to privately foster a child at least six weeks prior to the child's arrival (in an emergency, within 48 hours of the child's arrival).
- Allow a social worker to visit their home and see the child.
- Provide information to the social worker as required.
- Allow the social worker to inspect their home and make reasonable recommendations.
- Report any changes in the household.
- Comply with any legal requirement.
- Make an agreement with parents about their expected level of involvement in the day-to-day care and decision-making about their child.
- Promote the child or young person's welfare in their home.
- Notify the City of London's Children and Families Team within 48 hours of when a child or young person leaves their care, stating why and giving the name and address of the person into whose care they have been moved.

## Will you be able to claim benefits?

Foster carers may be able to claim Universal Credit. Contact the City of London Benefits team for more information:

020 7332 3937 / [benefits@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

## Where do I go if I need help or advice?

Contact the City of London's Children and Families Team for advice and to arrange support services.

### Contact the Children and Families Team

020 7323 3621

Out of hours: 020 8356 2710

[dccsdutyf&ypteam@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:dccsdutyf&ypteam@cityoflondon.gov.uk)



## CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TEAM

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# PRIVATE FOSTERING

## A guide for parents and carers

  
city & hackney  
safeguarding  
children board



Is someone who is not a relative looking after your child or children on a full-time basis?

Are you looking after a non-relative's child on a full-time basis?

If the answer to either of these questions is yes, you may be involved in a private fostering arrangement.

## What is private fostering?

Private fostering is when a child or young person under the age of 16 (under 18 if they have a disability) is cared for and provided with accommodation, for more than 28 days, by an adult who is not a relative, by private arrangement between the parent and carer.

Usually, a birth parent chooses and arranges a private fostering placement. Private foster carers do not hold parental responsibility.

A relative, in this context, can be a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt. They can be a full or half relation, related by marriage or step-parents.

Partners of the mother or father of a child, and extended family members such as great aunts and uncles or parent's cousins, do not qualify as a relative.

## Reasons for private foster care

A child or young person may be placed in a private fostering situation if they:

- Must live away from their family as a result of separation, divorce or disputes at home.
- Are sent to this country for education or health opportunities.
- Are a cultural exchange student.
- Have parents who study or work during unsociable hours, which makes it difficult for them to use ordinary child care provisions.

## What is the City of London's role?

The City of London has a legal duty to ensure that children and young people in private fostering are well cared for and safeguarded from harm. Our responsibilities include:

- Checking that prospective carers are suitable to care for the child.
- Making regular visits to children at their foster home.
- Ensuring that parents and carers are aware of their responsibilities.
- Providing support and advice to parents and carers.
- Offering advice about private fostering arrangements.

By monitoring and supervising private fostering placements, we can help to safeguard children who may be at risk of abuse or neglect.

The City of London's Children's Services should be notified of all private fostering arrangements in the City by contacting 020 7332 3621 / [dccsdutyf&ypteam@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:dccsdutyf&ypteam@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

## What are the parental responsibilities?

Under the Children Act 1989, parents must inform the local authority that they are entering into a private fostering arrangement.

Parents should also:

- Check that the placement is suitable for the child
- Provide the carer with as much information as possible about the child such as health records, school records, religious and cultural requirements, eating preferences, hobbies, likes and dislikes.
- Contact the City of London's Children and Families Team at least six weeks prior to the arrangement being made (within 48 hours of the arrangement being made, in case of an emergency).

## Will you lose your parental rights?

- No, as your child is only being looked after temporarily.
- You retain parental responsibility for your child and should be involved in all decisions concerning their development and upbringing.
- Frequent contact with your child is important so you can help make these decisions.

