



TRAFFORD
COUNCIL

PRIVATE FOSTERING

A GUIDE FOR CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE



Are you under 16 and not living with your parent(s), guardian or close family?

If you are staying with someone who isn't your parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, stepparent, brother or sister for more than 28 days, you are probably being privately fostered.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I AM PRIVATELY FOSTERED?

If you are under 16 (or under 18, if you have a disability) and your mum or dad have asked someone else to look after you for 28 days or more, this is called private fostering. The person who looks after you is called a private foster carer.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?

If you have been staying with a relative or a family friend, then your mum, dad or the person looking after you needs to get in touch with Trafford Children's Services - part of Trafford Council. If you want to know more, you might find it useful to read the questions and their answers in this leaflet.



WHY DOES PRIVATE FOSTERING HAPPEN?

There are lots of reasons why a parent thinks it may be best for their son or daughter to live in a different family home.

There are many children and young people who are cared for in this way.

It can happen when:

- your parent decides it is best to ask a friend or someone else to take care of you for a while if they, or another close relative cannot
- if things have been difficult at home, it is sometimes helpful for everyone to have their own space for a while, and time to think
- your parent may live in another country and might arrange for you to stay with friends or relatives in this country
- you might need to live away from home to attend education, training or be part of a Football Academy
- Your parent may need to go into hospital for a period of time (more than 28 days) and you need to be cared for by a friend

CAN MY PRIVATE FOSTER CARER DECIDE EVERYTHING FOR ME?

Not everything. They can decide what's best when it comes to most day-to-day things.

Private foster carers cannot change your name, or your school, or arrange for you to live somewhere else without your parents agreeing to this.

Your mum or dad are still responsible for you, and still must agree to medical treatment, unless they cannot be contacted quickly in an emergency, and then a doctor will decide.

CAN I STILL SEE MY PARENTS AND OTHER RELATIVES?

Your parent(s) and the private foster carers should arrange for you to see your family. You can also arrange to keep in touch with your parent(s) and other family and friends by video call, by phone, by texting or by e-mail or by writing a letter. It is also important that your parent(s) keep in touch with the private foster carers to make sure you are being well cared for.



WHAT WILL IT BE LIKE LIVING WITH PRIVATE FOSTER CARERS?

Private foster carers should look after you as if you were their own child. They should:

- make sure you are well cared for and as happy as you can be
- help you to stay in touch with your parent(s) and your family through visits, video or phone calls, texts, e-mails or letters

- make sure you are going to school or college
- take you to the doctor or hospital if you aren't well
- give you the chance to make friends and as far as possible, enjoy the activities you like
- respect the things that are important to you, like your religion and customs

WHAT ABOUT SOCIAL SERVICES AND SOCIAL WORKERS?

The law says that the social services department (Children's Services in Trafford) must make sure that you are safe and well cared for. Social workers make sure that children and young people are being cared for properly. They will visit you at least every 6 weeks in the first year you live with private foster carers. After that, visits will be at least every 12 weeks. If you want or need to see your social worker more frequently, they will arrange this for you. They will talk to your private foster carers to see if they need any help, and to your parent(s) to make sure they know that you are alright.

WHAT IF I'M NOT HAPPY, DON'T FEEL SAFE OR HAVE A PROBLEM?

You can talk to your social worker about your worries. They can also talk to your parent(s) and your carers to help you work things out. Don't worry if you find it hard to talk to your social worker. The most important thing is to make sure you have someone you can talk to - like a teacher or friend. If you don't want to talk to someone you know, there are websites and phone numbers for organisations who will listen to your worries (details below).

YOU WILL BE LISTENED TO BECAUSE YOUR VIEWS COUNT AND WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY IS IMPORTANT TO US.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Childline - phone **0800 11 11** (freephone). You can ring this number and talk to a counsellor who is there to listen to you and talk through your worries.

This is a free 24 hour helpline for children and young people. Or contact someone through the website - **www.childline.org.uk**

NSPCC - phone 0808 800 5000

Call this number if you are having problems at home or at school and want to talk to someone about it.

My social worker's name is:

They can be contacted on:


ANY QUESTIONS

If you need to ask anything about private fostering, feel unhappy, unsafe or have a problem please contact Trafford Children's Services on **0161 912 5125** or **firstresponse@trafford.gov.uk**





CONTACT US



If you would like further information about private fostering, please contact us on:

0161 912 5125 or
firstresponse@trafford.gov.uk

If you would like this leaflet in another language or format, please ask your social worker.

Talbot Rd, Old Trafford,
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www.trafford.gov.uk

