

ARE YOU CARING FOR SOMEONE ELSE'S CHILD?

A CARER'S GUIDE TO PRIVATE FOSTERING



www.fosteringrotherham.com

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If you are looking after, or intend to look after someone else's child, then you may have entered into a private fostering arrangement. This means you may be a private foster carer and you are required to inform Rotherham Council's Children's Services of the agreement.

Private fostering occurs when a parent makes arrangements for their child to be cared for by someone other than themselves for more than 28 days. This may be with extended family (not a blood relative or someone connected through marriage) or a family friend. A child is considered to be anyone under the age of 16, or a disabled young person under 18.

Reasons why you could be privately fostering a child

- Parental separation, divorce or arguments within the child's home.
- A teenage boyfriend or girlfriend of your own child living with you.
- Looking after a child whose parents study or work involves unsociable hours and they are unable to use ordinary day care.
- Looking after a child who has been sent to this country for education or healthcare reasons by birth parents living overseas.

What should I do if I intend to privately foster a child?

The law now states that if you look after someone else's child, or are planning to do so, you must let Rotherham Council know so that they can assist you in ensuring the child remains safe. It is an offence not to inform the Council of a private fostering arrangement.

You must inform us six weeks before the arrangement is due to commence. If the child comes to live with you in an emergency, you must notify us within 48 hours.

The needs of the child

In order to give the child the best support, it is important you work with us and the child's parents to make sure the child feels safe and well cared for.

It is important to find out about the child's education, health and religious beliefs. As well as everyday things such as their favorite foods, hobbies or any groups they attend. This information will help you to keep continuity in the child's life.

Support for you

Rotherham Council has a duty to make sure the child is safe and ensure that you get the support and advice you need. Initially you will need to have statutory checks which are carried out to make sure the needs of the child will be met.

We will also arrange regular visits to see how the child has settled in with you and provide you with support, practical information and advice, as well as details about benefits that may be available to you.

Contact us

Tel: 01709 822532 (Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.30pm)

Out of hours service: 01709 336080
(Monday to Friday 5.30pm onwards / weekends 9am onwards)

Email: fosteringduty@rotherham.gov.uk

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