

What information will you be required to present at the first visit?

Documents

- Driving Licence
- Car Insurance
- MOT Certificate
- DBS checks for everyone in the household aged 16 and over
- Gas Safety Certificate

What type of checks do we carry out and how often?

Type of check	Frequency
Social Services	Every referral received
DBS	Every three years
Medical	Every three years
Health Visitor	Yearly (if your child is under 5 years)
School	Yearly (if your child is under 16 years)
LADO	Yearly
CAFCASS	Every three years
Ofsted	Yearly (if registered child minder)
Personal Reference	Once
Employment	Once (unless you change your job)
NSPCC	Once

We are here to help!

Further information

BCP Council
Private Fostering
North Bournemouth Local Office
27 Slades Farm Road
Ensburry Park
Bournemouth
BH10 4ES

T. 01202 127360

E. private.fostering@bcpcouncil.gov.uk
bcpcouncil.gov.uk/privatefostering

Children Act 1989

Visit: legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/section/105

Private Fostering Regulations 2005

Visit: legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2005/1533/made

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

Visit: [gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard- children--2](http://gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2)

PRIVATE FOSTERING



Are You Caring for Someone
Else's Child?



A BCP Council service delivered across Bournemouth,
Christchurch, Poole and Dorset



[bcpcouncil.gov.uk/
privatefostering](http://bcpcouncil.gov.uk/privatefostering)



What is Private Fostering?

Private Fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative'. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and a carer, for 28 days or more.

Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts (whether of full blood, half blood or marriage).

How may Private Fostering occur?

Private Fostering often involves children who are:

- Sent to this country for education or health care by birth parents living overseas and these children are staying with a 'host' family for 28 days or more
- Living with a family friend as a result of parental separation or other reasons
- Living with the family of boyfriend or girlfriend
- Living with a family friend as their parent's work involves unsocial hours.

What should I do if I am or intend to be a private foster carer?

The law requires that you tell us at least six weeks before the arrangement begins that you intend to privately foster a child, unless the arrangement is made in an emergency in which case the notification must be made within 48 hours.

Make sure the child's parents give you as much information as they can on their child's health, eating preferences, school, hobbies and religion. This will help you to better understand their child.

Why do Children's Services have to be involved?

The Children Act 1989, gives local authority Children's Services a legal duty to safeguard the wellbeing of all children. An essential part of this is to assess that private foster carers are suitable to care for a child.

We will work with the child, their parents and their private foster carers to ensure that the best possible arrangements are in place for the child.

This includes:

- Listening to the child's wishes and feelings
- Arranging for a social worker to visit the private foster carers and the child
- Assisting carers to fill in the necessary forms to apply to be a private foster carer
- Helping to ensure that the child's cultural, linguistic and religious needs are being met
- Offering advice and support to the child, their parent(s) and private foster carers.

If we think that the arrangement is unsuitable, we will decide what action to take to safeguard the child's welfare. This often means providing appropriate advice to the carers and parents and taking necessary action.

Assessment process

Once you notify us about the young person staying with you, the social worker will need to attend your home and complete an assessment with you. The visit needs to be completed within 7 working days of us being notified, to comply with Private Fostering Regulations 2005.

The social worker will call you to arrange a time and date that is convenient. The first visit will take approximately 90 minutes to make sure that everything is in place for the young person, to keep them safe and receive the support they need.

The social worker will ask how you will support the young person to meet her/his needs in terms of education, health, emotional wellbeing and identity.

On your first visit the social worker will complete a Health and Safety Questionnaire about your home. They will also request that you sign a Written Agreement and a Declaration Form regarding any criminal offences and will ask for your written consent to share information with and request information from other agencies.

What are the financial implications of Private Foster caring?

In some cases there may be financial help available through the local authority for those children who are assessed to be 'in need'. However, financial responsibility for the child's day to day needs remains with the parent(s).

You may also be able to claim welfare benefits such as Child Benefit or Income Support. Contact your local benefits agency for more information.

What if the child leaves my care?

You must tell the Local Authority within 48 hours when the child has left your care. You must also give us the name and address of the person who will be caring for the child from then on. At the final visit you will each be requested to complete a simple feedback form.

