



Examples of private fostering

- Matt had an argument with his mother Tina and has gone to stay with his friend Connor and his family. Connor's parents are happy to look after Matt and Matt has now been there for more than 28 days. Matt is 15 years old.
- Paul has been made homeless. Paul has nowhere to stay. Paul has a ten year old daughter called Florence. Paul arranges for Florence to stay with his old neighbour Sharron while he tries to secure other accommodation.

These types of private fostering arrangements are quite common in Portsmouth.



© John Birdsall. Posed by models

Notifications of private fostering arrangements in the Portsmouth area should be made to:

The Portsmouth MASH
(Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)

Please call on **023 9268 8793**.
Alternatively you can email
mash@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
or **privatefostering@portsmouthcc.gov.uk**

For further information on private fostering, visit:

www.privatefostering.org.uk or
www.portsmouth.gov.uk/services/health-and-care/fostering



Corporate member of Plain English Campaign
Committed to clearer communication
264

You can get this Portsmouth City Council information in large print, Braille, audio or in another language by calling 9268 8830.

Designed by: marketing@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
Published: **March 2021** Ref: 31.215

Information on private fostering



© John Birdsall. Posed by models

Do you know someone under 16 who is living away from their parents?*
* or under 18 for a young person with a disability

What is private fostering?



© John Birdsall. Posed by models

Private fostering is when a child under 16 (or under 18 if they are disabled) lives with an adult who is not a close family member for 28 days or more, or if there is an intention that the child will stay for more than 28 days. It is a private arrangement made by the parent and the carers, and in some circumstances is a choice made by the child.

What do we mean by close family member?

A close relative or family member is an aunt, uncle, step-parent (by marriage), grandparent or sibling, but not cousin, great aunt/uncle or a family friend.



Why would a child not live at home?

There can be many reasons why a child doesn't live at home and someone else is required to care for them:

- Family relationship breakdown or divorce
- Parents subject to a custodial sentence
- Parental illness (physical or mental)
- Parental homelessness
- Parent arranging for a child to be cared for whilst they work or study away

And there are many more reasons...

It is a legal requirement that Portsmouth City Council are notified of a private fostering arrangement. Legally, Portsmouth City Council should be notified by the parent or carer of the child when an arrangement is taking place.

However, it is everybody's responsibility to be able to identify private fostering arrangements and support the carers or parents to notify the local authority.

What do Portsmouth City Council do?

The reason the local authority assesses private fostering arrangements is to safeguard the welfare of the child. The social worker will do this by completing an assessment of the carers including making checks such as DBS checks, GP medical questionnaires and council checks.

When the private fostering social worker receives a notification, they have a duty to see the child, the carer and the household members within 7 days to assess the arrangement. A fuller Capacity to Care assessment needs to be made within 42 days.

What else do we do?

- Gain the child's views
- Offer support to the child through Child in Need planning
- Offer ongoing support and advice (not financial) to the private foster carer
- Offer support and advice to the parents
- Offer training opportunities to private foster carers

Parents maintain their parental responsibilities and continue to be involved in all decisions about their child's life during the private fostering arrangement.