



## Private fostering



If you wish to make a referral, or clarify whether an arrangement meets the criteria for private fostering, contact:

### Private Fostering Social Worker:

Gloucestershire County Council  
2nd Floor  
Quayside House  
Shire Hall  
Gloucester  
GL1 2JU

t: **01452 427758**

e: [private.fostering@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:private.fostering@gloucestershire.gov.uk)  
[www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/privatefostering](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/privatefostering)

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# Information for professionals in the Education, Health and Social Care fields

We are here to offer help, support and advice...

## What is private fostering?

Private fostering is when a child or young person aged under 16 (or under 18 if they are disabled), is cared for and provided with accommodation for 28 days or more by an adult who is not a close relative. A close relative is an aunt, uncle, step-parent, grandparent or sibling, but not a cousin, grand aunt/uncle or a family friend.

## What situations can be classed as private fostering?

Private fostering covers a diverse range of situations. Here are some of the most common:

- Children sent to this country for education or health care by birth parents living overseas
- Children living with a friend's family as a result of parental separation, divorce or arguments at home
- Teenagers living with a family of a boyfriend or girlfriend
- Children whose parents' study or work involves unsociable hours, which make it difficult for them to use ordinary day care or after school care.

## What are the Children's Services responsibilities?

Although it is a private arrangement there are certain duties and responsibilities under the Children Act 1989 and 2004, to ensure that children who are privately fostered are protected. It is the job of Gloucestershire Children's Services to check that these regulations are being observed.

The law requires that the directorate makes regular visits to ensure that children are safe and well cared for, and that advice is available to those caring for them. They have to check various aspects of the fostering arrangements, including undertaking safeguard checks on the carers, and assessing whether or not they find the arrangement acceptable.

Gloucestershire Children's Services has the power to stop a person from private fostering if the carer is not suitable, or the accommodation is not suitable. Alternatively, if they consider something is particularly unsatisfactory, they can make it a requirement that the carer takes action to remedy the problem e.g. by installing a fireguard or smoke detectors.

It is the responsibility of the directorate to assess the suitability of the arrangement. They are required to say whether or not they accept the arrangement made, and in doing so reach a proper balance between the private responsibilities of parents and public duties to safeguard the welfare of children in private foster care.



## Who is responsible within Gloucestershire Children's Services for private fostering?

Gloucestershire Children's Services has additional information on private fostering which can be found on the private fostering pages of the Gloucestershire County Council web site. You may also find it helpful to go through the following checklist to find out if the arrangement is likely to come under the private fostering regulations. Please note that a 'no' answer does not automatically mean that the arrangement does not fall under the private fostering regulations.



## Private Fostering Checklist

	Yes	No
Is the young person under 16 (or 18 if a child with disabilities)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are they being provided with accommodation by someone other than a parent, person with parental responsibility or relative?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the parents in agreement with the arrangement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has the young person been accommodated for a period of 28 days or more? If not, is the intent to accommodate for a period of 28 days or more?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the young persons parents/persons with parental responsibility living in separate accommodation from the young person?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>