



**Are you looking
after someone
else's child?**

This may be a private fostering arrangement

**See inside for further explanation and
guidance about what to do next**

☎ 020 8379 2814 ✉ privatefostering@enfield.gov.uk

www.enfield.gov.uk/fostering





What is Private Fostering?

Private fostering is when a child aged under 16 years old (or up to 18 years old if they have a disability) is looked after full time for more than 28 days.

Private fostering is an arrangement agreed between the child's parent/s (or persons who have parental responsibility) and the person or family who will be caring for the child.

A private foster carer is someone who is NOT the child's:

- Parent (or legal step parent (including civil partnerships) or someone else with parental responsibility)
- Grandparent
- Siblings (including half siblings)



If you know of a private fostering arrangement, then you must contact Enfield's Multi Agency

Examples of Private Fostering

- Children sent from abroad to live with other families; or extended family members, in the UK.
- Children whose parents have paid someone to care for them whilst they are away working or studying.
- Unaccompanied minors who are living with friends or someone who was previously unknown to the family who is willing to privately foster their child.
- Teenagers living with the family of a friend.
- Children who are attending schools in the UK and who live with a local family.
- Children brought to the UK for adoption.
- Children and young people, who have to live away from their own family as a result of parental separation, divorce or arguments at home.



What a birth parent must do

The law requires that you must tell your Local Authority at least six weeks before the arrangement begins that you intend for somebody else to privately foster your child. However, if the arrangement is made in an emergency the notification must be made within 48 hours of the placement starting.

The information provided by birth parents to the private foster carer must include the child's full name, date of birth, ethnicity, religion/beliefs, special needs, medical needs, school and doctor details. There should also be details about the reason for, and the intended length of the private fostering arrangement.

It is a good idea for parents to have a written agreement with the carer so that everyone is clear about how the child should be cared for. This should include consent to medical treatment, educational issues and financial arrangements.



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Responsibilities of Enfield Children's Social Care?

Enfield Council's Social Care has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their borough and to ensure that those in private fostering arrangements are safe and secure. To fulfil this duty we will:

- Assess the suitability of the arrangement by acting on any information provided by parents, carers and professionals.
- Check the suitability of the carer and their accommodation.
- Visit the carer and child every 6 weeks (the first visit will take place within 1 week), and after one year of the child living with their carer, the visits will then be every 12 weeks.
- Speak to the child alone.
- Offer advice and support to the carer, child and parents.
- Ensure statutory checks are completed on all adults living in the private foster carer's home.
- Ensure two references are completed on the private foster carers.
- Make contact with the birth parent(s) usually at the start and end of the fostering arrangement and during the placement too if required



Nung's Story

My name is Nung and I am 14 years old. I am from China and I came to the UK with my parents. I am keen on having a good education and I love football. My parents and I agreed that it would be best if I remain in the UK so that I have the opportunity to get the best education, and of course access the best football training. My parents have returned to China and I now live with a host family in Enfield. I attend a Private school in Hammersmith and I go back to China during school holidays. I speak to my parents every day and I also visit my cousin Luo, who lives in Birmingham with his host family.

Tamika's Story

My name is Tamika and I am 7 years old. I lived with my parents from when I was born, up until my parents separated 2 years ago. My dad could not live in the UK and returned to Zimbabwe. My mum became unwell and found it difficult to take me to school, play with me or even cook for me. My mum and dad talked about how hard things were for me and my mum. They agreed that it was best that I stayed with my mum's friend, Shona until my mum gets better. I was happy about this because I already knew Shona and her children. The good thing about living with Shona is that I get to speak to my mum, my dad and Shona takes me to visit my mum. I guess I will go back to my mum's when she gets better again.



Gary's Story

I am Gary and I am 14 years old. I live with my best friend Thao and his parents. I left home because I did not get on with my mum's new boyfriend and my half-sister. My dad lives far away. He works full time and has no spare room for me. My dad is happy for me to stay with Thao's parents and he gives them money for my upkeep. I am happy living with Thao and his parents.



The people looking after Nung, Tamika and Gary are **Private Foster Carers**.

What will the private foster carer do for Nung, Tamika or Gary?

The private foster carer should do everything that parents do for their children.

- Ensure they have regular meals
- Make sure that they have warm clean clothes and a bed of their own
- Make sure they go to school
- Ensure that they are registered with a GP
- Take them to the doctor or hospital if they are unwell
- Make sure that they have a chance to make friends and enjoy extracurricular activities
- Help them to stay in touch with their family and social worker (if they have one)
- Respect things that are important to them and their family such as religion/beliefs, culture and diet

What private foster carers cannot do

Parental responsibility remains with the child's parents. This means private foster carers will not be able to:

- Change their name
- Change their school
- Move them to another family
- Take them to another part of the country or another country without the parents' permission
- Agree urgent medical treatment without the parents' permission. If the parents cannot be contacted about this, the doctor will decide on the best thing to do.

PRIVATE FOSTERING

If you know of a private fostering arrangement you must contact Enfield Council's Children's Social Care.

You can do this through Enfield's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and you do not need to give your name when you get in touch.

Contact Enfield's MASH by telephone 020 8379 5555 or using Enfield's online children's service portal
www.enfield.gov.uk/childrensportal

For advice and general enquiries call **020 8379 2814**



Private fostering contact information:
referrals 020 8379 5555
advice 020 8379 2814

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