



Is your child living with  
someone else?

Are you looking after  
someone else's child?

Information about private fostering

# What is private fostering?

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (or 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, expected to last 28 days or more. Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts (whether of full blood, half blood or marriage/affinity).

## What you must do if you are a parent of a child who is privately fostered or a private foster carer?

- **Parent:** If your child is being looked after by someone who is not a close relative, and this is likely to continue for more than 28 days, the law requires you to notify your local council.
- **Carer:** If you are likely to be looking after someone else's child for 28 days or more, the law requires you to notify your local council.

To notify South Gloucestershire Council  
please call ☎ 01454 866000

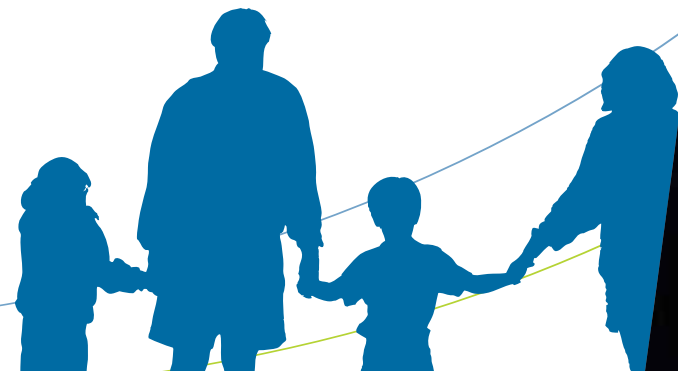


# What will South Gloucestershire Council do?

All councils are legally required to make sure that children being privately fostered are well cared for, safe and that their needs are being met. When you tell us of a private fostering arrangement we will:

- regularly visit the private foster carer and child in their home to speak to them
- speak to the parents
- provide help and advice. For example, making sure that the carer receives all the welfare benefits that they are entitled to, and help to reunite the child with their parents if it is appropriate to do so.

However, if we think that an arrangement is unsuitable and the child cannot be returned to his or her parents, we will have to act to protect the child. This might mean providing support to the carer or, in some circumstances, taking the child into care.



# Not ready to call us?

If you are looking after someone else's child, or your child is living away from home, or you know of a child who is not living with their family, you must tell your local council straight away.

However if you would like to talk it through with someone first, please call:

■ **Fosterline** – the foster carers' advice line

☎ **0800 040 7675**

## Do you know of a child who is privately fostered?

If you know of a child who is not living with their family please don't ignore it. It is likely that everything is fine, but it is a legal requirement that the parent/carer inform their local council. If appropriate speak to the parent or carer. Alternatively you can contact South Gloucestershire Council directly on

☎ **01454 866000**

**If you would like this information in a different format or language, please contact ☎ 01454 868009**