

You should give important information about your child and give as much detail as possible. This should include what they like to eat, what they like to do in their spare time, and about their school.

It is very important that you let the private foster carer know of your child's medical history and pass on his/her health records, as well as his/her religious and cultural background. This will help the private foster carers look after your child and understand them better.

Why do Tower Hamlets have to get involved in this arrangement?

Tower Hamlets have a legal duty to ensure that your child is being

looked after safely and that the arrangement is suitable for your child. We will make regular visits to your child and his/her private foster carer, and are able to provide help and advice where necessary.

If the private foster carer is not giving you enough information or you are unhappy about the standard of care your child is receiving, then you should contact the Private Fostering Social Work Team as soon as possible. We, in partnership with yourselves, will do our best to ensure that your child is safe and well looked after.

If your child is being privately fostered or if you plan to have your child privately fostered, then you must contact the Private Fostering Social Work Team on **020 7364 5006** or visit **www.towerhamlets.gov.uk**. This team can give you further information and answer any questions that you may have.

Is someone else providing care for your child?



Information on Private Fostering for **Parents**

As from 1 July 2005, the Government introduced new legislation and guidance on private fostering. The aim of this leaflet is to provide information to parents who have or are considering having their children looked after by someone else. This leaflet will give you information about your rights and duties as a parent.

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.

A private fostering arrangement is normally organised between the parent and carer.

There are many private fostering situations. These can include:

- Children or young people who are sent to this country for education or health care by their birth parents from overseas.
- Children or young people whose parents work or study long and/or antisocial hours.
- Children or young people who are living with a friend's family as a result of parental separation, divorce or arguments at home.
- Children or young people living with their partner's family.

What should I do if my child is being or will be looked after by someone else?

You have a responsibility to ensure that your child is in a suitable and safe private fostering arrangement that provides for your child's cultural, religious, linguistic and other needs. If you think that your child will be in this placement for 28 days or longer, you have a legal duty to tell the London Borough of Tower Hamlets at least 6 weeks before this arrangement is due to start.

If the arrangement is due to start within 6 weeks or is already in place, then you must tell the Private Fostering Social Work Team at the London Borough of Tower Hamlets immediately.

The Law states that you must tell us of a private fostering arrangement within the timescales outlined. This information will help us to ensure that your child is well looked after and does not come to any harm.

A private fostering arrangement does not mean that you are giving up your rights to your child. This is a temporary arrangement and you still have parental responsibility and will continue to be involved in all decisions about your child's life. It is very important that you stay in contact with your child as much as possible. By staying in contact you will know of any changes in circumstances of the carer, such as going on holiday or if they move house.

What information do I need to give to the carer?

You should ensure that there is a formal agreement with the private foster carer so that all parties are aware of the expectations and everyone is clear about their roles and responsibilities.