



Right for Children, Families and Adults



Are you being
cared for by
someone else?
we care!

A guide to private
fostering for young people.

Private fostering is defined as:

“When a child or young person under 16 years old (or 18 if they have a disability) is cared for by someone who is not a parent, close relative, guardian or person with parental responsibility for 28 days or more without the content involvement of Walsall Council.”

An arrangement is likely to be private fostering if the child lives with:

- Cousin
- Friend or neighbour
- Host family
- Great aunt/uncle
- Great grandparent
- A divorced step-parent
- Independent boarding school (if the child remains for more than two weeks during the holidays)
- Cultural use of aunt or uncle who are no blood relation

Close relatives are defined as:

- Brothers and sisters
- Aunts and uncles
- Grandparents
- Step-parents

It is not private fostering if the arrangement has been made by Walsall Council or if the person looking after the child is an approved foster carer. Some of the common reasons why private fostering takes place are:

- A child's parents are overseas
- A child lives with their best friend's parents because they have had an argument with their own parents
- A young person is living with the family of their boyfriend/girlfriend
- Children are on a cultural exchange which last for more than 27 days
- A family friend takes on a child as the parents are experiencing a difficult period in their life
- Children are in the country for health or education opportunities
- Children are at boarding school
- Refugee children or unaccompanied asylum seekers



If you are looking after someone else's child, know someone who is, or your child is being cared for by someone else, you must tell us.

The law states that you must tell Walsall Council six weeks before the arrangement starts, or immediately if you haven't already told them. This is to make sure that the child is:

- Well looked after
- Receiving a proper education
- Encouraged to reach their full potential
- Keeping in touch with people who are important to them
- Properly supported

Private foster carers carry out an important role and we offer them support and guidance to be able to do this. We can only do this if we know about the arrangement. Many private fostering arrangements remain hidden, leaving children vulnerable to abuse and neglect.

Get in touch!

Privately fostered children are one of the largest groups of vulnerable people in the UK.

Don't let them be forgotten. If you think you know of a child who is in a private fostering arrangement, please contact our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub on **0300 555 2866 (option 2)**

For further information please scan the QR code.



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