

PRIVATE FOSTERING - *Duty to Notify the Local Authority*

There are times when, due to changes at home, a child may need to live with someone who is not their parent or a close family member. These arrangements can provide stability and support and offer positive opportunities for the child and their family. To help recognise when such situations may meet the criteria for Private Fostering, the NYSCP is sharing the following information for all practitioners working with children.

What is Private Fostering?

A Private Fostering arrangement is when a child under 16 (or under 18 if they have a disability) is cared for by someone who is not a parent or close relative.

- In the carer's home,
- And it is intended to last 28 days or more.

These arrangements are often made with parental agreement, but not always.

Who is a “close relative”?

A parent, stepparent, grandparent, sibling, aunt, or uncle. (It does **not** include cousins, great-aunts/uncles, or family friends).

Homes for Ukraine (HFU) Scheme

Children from Ukraine who are living in private arrangements should be considered under the statutory definition of Private Fostering where they are under 16 years of age (or under 18 if disabled) and are cared for by someone who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility or close relative for 28 days or more. In addition, children under 18 arriving through the Homes for Ukraine Scheme without a parent or legal guardian are subject to specific safeguarding requirements under Homes for Ukraine guidance and should be referred to Children's Services for assessment and oversight.

Parental Responsibility

The parent of a privately fostered child continues to hold parental responsibility throughout the private fostering arrangement.

Your duty

All practitioners working with children, including schools, colleges, education settings, health, and voluntary and community groups, have a mandatory duty to notify North Yorkshire Council's Children and Young People's Service. when they know of, are told about, or suspect a private fostering arrangement, so that they can assess the arrangement and carry out statutory visits to safeguard the child.

Why does the duty exist?

The Children and Young People's Service. needs to know when children are being privately fostered so they can ensure the child is safe and that both the child and their carers receive the support they need.

The statutory responsibility for Private Fostering lies with North Yorkshire Council's Children and Young People's Service

Situations that could involve Private Fostering

- A child staying with a friend's family due to changes at home.
- A child from overseas living long-term with a host family.
- A young person living with another family for education.
- A child staying with non-relatives while parents work away.

How to notify

- Telephone the North Yorkshire Children & Families Service Customer Resolution Centre: 0300 131 2 131
- Follow up with the Universal Referral Form, available via the [NYSCP Website, Making a Referral, Professionals](#)
- Ensure your safeguarding records reflect the actions taken.

What to do next

Share key information with colleagues and your wider networks at your next meeting, briefing, or learning session.

Make sure staff have access to the relevant resources, including links to the NYSCP website and Private Fostering guidance

Resources and Further Help

- [NYSCP Private Fostering Guidance](#)
- [NYSCP Notification of Private Fostering Arrangements](#)
- [NYSCP What is Private Fostering? A Guide for Parents](#) (Contains further links)
- [National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering GOV.UK](#)
- [Video - Private Fostering in North Yorkshire](#)

If you are a professional seeking advice, and the Children & Families Service does not currently support the child, you can access advice from a Multi-Agency Screening Team (MAST) Social Worker via the professionals' consultation line.

[01609 535070](tel:01609535070), Available between 10 am and 4 pm Monday to Friday (except bank holidays)

If the child and their family are already working with a Social Worker or Children and Families Worker, please get in touch with them for guidance.

Ends

Circulation:

- DSL Networks via Red Bag
- NYSCP Website Blog
- Children & Families Bulletin / Notification
- NYSCP Developments in Safeguarding February Learning Event and Slides
- NYSCP February E Bulletin
- VCSE Networks – Direct Email

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