

## Are you looking after somebody else's child or do you know someone who is?

- ✓ Is it for 28 days or more?
- ✓ Is the child under 16, or under 18 if disabled?
- ✓ Not living with a close relative?  
Close relatives include parents, legal guardians, grandparents, stepparents through marriage, aunts and uncles BUT NOT great aunts and uncles, cousins or family friends.
- ✓ Was the arrangement made privately and not through the local authority?

If you answered **YES** to all four, this is called Private Fostering and **by law you must inform Devon County Council.**

## Somebody else is looking after my child. What should I do now?

As the child's parent, you are legally required to inform Devon County Council. It is an offence not to do so and you could be prosecuted.

### When should I inform you?

- ✓ Tell us at least six weeks before the child moves
- ✓ If plans are made less than six weeks before tell us immediately
- ✓ If your child is already living with carers, please tell us immediately.

## What the Private Fostering Team will do

The Private Fostering Team is part of Devon County Council's Children's Services. We will work with the parents and carers to make sure the child is safe and well cared for in the arrangement. We will:

- ✓ make sure the carers are trustworthy – everyone in the household aged 16 years or older will need to have a DBS check
- ✓ support both parents and carers to ensure that the child's physical, emotional, educational and cultural needs are met
- ✓ help parents and carers consider finance, consent and contact needs
- ✓ visit the child and carers regularly, providing advice and support
- ✓ be a listening ear for child, parents and carers for any concerns or difficulties there maybe.

## Some examples of private fostering arrangements

- A teenager who isn't getting on with their parents and goes to live with a friend's family
- Children living with host families for a variety of reasons e.g. attending a language school, on exchange trips, spending time at local schools
- Children who need to be cared for away from home due to their parent's ill health.



## What should professionals do?

There are a number of professionals who may come into contact with children or families who are involved in private fostering arrangements. These include teachers, religious leaders, doctors and health visitors.

If you are a professional and are made aware of a private fostering arrangement, you should inform Devon County Council's Private Fostering Team and encourage the child's parents or carers to do so as well.

You will not be breaching confidentiality by informing us. This legislation is in place to protect and safeguard children.

## For further information about private fostering

[www.devon.gov.uk/privatefostering](http://www.devon.gov.uk/privatefostering)  
email: [privatefostering@devon.gov.uk](mailto:privatefostering@devon.gov.uk)  
phone: 0345 155 1071

## Caring for somebody else's child or someone caring for yours ?

This may be private fostering

