



## Why do Stoke-on-Trent City Council have to be involved?

The law gives all children's services in the country a duty to safeguard the welfare of privately fostered children.

We will make sure they are:

- safe and well looked-after
- healthy
- receiving a proper education
- being encouraged to reach their full potential
- keeping in touch with people who are important to them
- living with someone who helps them value their culture and sense of identity
- properly supported when they become independent

Despite this, many private fostering arrangements remain hidden, leaving children at risk of abuse and neglect.



### Contact us

If you know that a child is being looked after by another family then talk to someone at Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Children's Social Care Team.

Phone 01782 235100

Email [SRT.Referrals@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:SRT.Referrals@stoke.gov.uk)

**Privately fostered children are one of the largest groups of vulnerable children in the UK. Don't let them be forgotten!**

## Are You Looking After Someone Else's Child?

Is your child living with another family?



*Keeping children safe*

SCB Leaflet No 13

**Review date October 2018**

## Are you looking after someone else's child?

### ***If so you could be a private foster carer and entitled to benefits and support.***

Private fostering is when a child or young person under 16 years old (or 18 if they have a disability) is looked after for 28 days or more by someone **who is not** a close relative, guardian or person with parental responsibility.

Close relatives, include parents, step-parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents.

It is not private fostering if the arrangement was made by Stoke-on-Trent City Council, or if the person looking after the child is an approved foster carer.

People become private foster carers, for all sorts of reasons. Private foster carers can be a friend of the child's family, or be someone who is willing to care for the child or a family they do not know.

### **Children are privately fostered for a variety of reasons. These can include:**

- Children living with a friend's family as a result of a parental separation, divorce or arguments at home
- Children with parents overseas
- Children on holiday exchanges which last more than 28 days.

If you are unsure if your situation is private fostering contact **01782 235100** to discuss it.

## You need to tell Stoke-on-Trent City Council

### **What the law says:**

By law, Stoke-on-Trent City Council must be told about all private fostering situations. The child's parents, private foster carer and anyone else involved in the arrangement are legally required to inform us.

People involved in private fostering must contact us in the following timescales.

- If the child is not yet living with private foster carers

#### **Six weeks beforehand**

- If the child moves in with private foster carers in less than six weeks

#### **Immediately**

- If the child is already living with private foster carers

#### **Immediately**

## What will Stoke-on-Trent City Council do?

We will work with the child, parents and private foster carer to make sure that the best possible arrangements are in place for the child. This includes:

- Visiting the child and private foster carer.
- Helping to make sure that the child's racial, cultural, linguistic and religious needs are being met.
- Offering advice and support to the child, their parents and private foster carer.

## What should professionals do?

Professionals should make sure that Stoke-on-Trent City Council know about all private fostering arrangements.

This includes a wide range of people who come in contact with children such as teachers, early years practitioners, religious leaders, doctors and health visitors. Professionals should also encourage the child's parent or carer to notify Stoke-on-Trent City Council. You will not be breaching confidentiality by notifying us, but you will be helping to safeguard a child.

