



Private Fostering

What is Private Fostering ?

- Private fostering is a private arrangement between a parent and a carer, to look after a child/children under the age of 16 (18 if disabled).
- The carer would not be a blood relative, therefore : a cousin, great aunt/uncle, neighbour, friend as well as boarding schools
- This arrangement would have to be more than 28 days, before being considered as PF arrangement

Private Fostering Situations

- Local children living apart from their families
- Children from overseas
- Child care arrangements
- Asylum seekers and refugees
- Parents who may be unwell
- Children who may be staying with friends for a short time due to family difficulties
- Children attending language schools
- Children at independent boarding schools who do not return home for holidays
- Children living with another family for a variety of reasons
- Children brought into the UK for adoption

What the Law says about Private fostering

- The law requires that both the parents and carer must notify the local authority about the proposed arrangement before it takes place; failure to give notification is an offence. Local Authorities do not approve private foster carers.
- The local authority is required to assess and say whether or not they agree and accept the private fostering arrangement in regard to a particular child.

What your responsibilities are ?

- It is also imperative that all agencies are aware of the relationship between private fostering and safeguarding activities. Some children who are privately fostered may also have been trafficked, be at risk of exploitation, domestic servitude and abuse.
- If you are aware that a child is being privately fostered, encourage the parents or private foster carer to notify us about their arrangements, explaining that it is the legal duty of both parents and carers to do this. **
- All key professionals and agencies who are involved with children/young people are able to access advice from MASH in the Assessment and Intervention Service on 020 7525 1921 or email MASH@southwark.gov.uk.

People who can help

- You can speak to or email or invite us to your team meetings...
- Rachael Omotayo, Specialist PF Senior Social Worker: 07395882517
Rachael.Omotayo@southwark.gov.uk
- Joyce Patton, Service Manager, SFS A; 07892703598;
Joyce.Patton@southwark.gov.uk