

The information and support available to privately fostered children

Support and Services

As set out in the Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005, all children in a private fostering arrangement will be visited by a social worker at six weekly intervals, but will also be able to contact this allocated worker for information and support when needed. All information is conveyed to the children who are privately fostered in an age appropriate format, which covers issues such as the responsibilities of their private foster carer, responsibilities of those with parental responsibility, contacting friends and family etc. This information will also include the social worker's name and contact details.

The purpose of these visits is to encourage the maintenance and improvement of the child's care and check that the child's needs are being met within the arrangement. These visits are important in establishing the wishes of the child.

If specialist support and advice is needed, other organisations may be contacted, with permission from the child, with a view to providing this specialist support.

Translation services are also available if the child is in need of them.

If a child is assessed as a child in need, a child in need plan will be developed and the appropriate support and services will be made available to the child and their family as outlined in section 17 of the 1989 Children Act.

Once a privately fostered child turns 16 or 18 if they are disabled, they are no longer considered to be privately fostered. However, under section 24 of the Children Act 1989, a disabled person who was (but is no longer) privately fostered after their sixteenth birthday are entitled to receive advice and assistance until they reach the age of 21 or 24 if they are in education or training. Support may include advice, befriending and discretionary financial assistance. It will be provided at the request of the young person on the basis of assessment of need and can continue up to the age of 21 or beyond if the young person is in higher education, up to the end of the course.¹

Feedback

When visiting privately fostered children, social workers will seek to speak to the child alone unless they consider it to be inappropriate. During these sessions, the child will have the opportunity to discuss their feelings and wishes with the supervisor.

If a child requires independent advice or advocacy services, the following contact details will be given to them in an age appropriate format:

National Youth Advocacy Service

Freephone helpline: 0808 808 1001

Email: help@nyas.net

The Voice Advocacy Service

Head office, Voice

320 City Road,

London

EC1V 2NZ

Phone: 0808 800 5792

Email: info@voiceyp.org

¹ <http://www.privatefostering.org.uk/profs/faqs>

http://www.google.co.uk/url?url=http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/c/children%2520act%25201989%2520%2520%2520guidance%2520on%2520private%2520fostering.pdf&rct=j&frm=1&q=&esrc=s&sa=U&ei=huPIU8vSHu_Q7Abf_YA4&ved=0CBQQFjAA&usg=AFQjCNFe4sz4DWazmL28JABYArxke6auxA p.20