



are you looking  
after someone  
else's child?

You need to know this.

authorities have an obligation to secure the welfare of every privately fostered child under the Foster Children (Scotland) Act 1984.

### What will the Social Work Department do when I contact them?

The Social Work Department is there to provide any advice or support you or the child might need while in your care. They will require certain details such as who will be the main carer, where the child will be living, their health and school history, their interests, religion, dietary needs, etc. The Social Work Department will also need to be assured that the child is safe and well cared for and someone may come and talk to you about this.

### What will happen if I fail to notify the Social Work Department

Failure to notify the local Social Work Department is an offence punishable by fine or imprisonment or both. Remember, the local authority is there to help and support you and to ensure the welfare of the child.

The care of children in private fostering arrangements is addressed in the following legislation which includes responsibilities of birth parents or guardians, private foster carers and local authorities.

- Foster Children (Scotland) Act 1984
- Foster Children (Private Fostering) (Scotland) Regulations 1985

The Care Commission has a duty to inspect how the local authority responds to private fostering in its area. The Care Commission can be contacted at: Compass House, 11 Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY Tel: 01382 207100

If you have any questions about the information contained in this leaflet please contact:  
The Duty Social Worker, Education & Children's Services, Perth & Kinross Council, Pullar House, 35 Kinnoull Street, PERTH PH1 5GD  
Tel: 01738 476768

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Duty Social Worker on 01738 476768

إن احتجت أنت أو أي شخص تعرفه نسخة من هذه الوثيقة بلغة أخرى أو تصميم آخر فيمكن الحصول عليها (أو على نسخة معدلة للملخص هذه الوثيقة مترجمة بلغة أخرى) بالاتصال ب:  
الاسم: Duty Social Worker  
رقم هاتف للاتصال المباشر: 01738 476768

اگر آپ کے کسی جاننے والے کو اس دستاویز کی نقل کسی دوسری زبان یا شکل میں درکار ہو، (کبھی کبھی یہ دستاویز کے ترجمے کا خلاصہ ہی پیش کیا جائے گا)، اس کا انتظام 01738 476768 پر Duty Social Worker سے رابطہ کر کے کیا جا سکتا ہے۔

如果你或你的朋友希望得到這文件的其他語言版本或形式 (某些時候，這些文件只會是概要式的翻譯)，請聯絡

Duty Social Worker 01738 476768

來替你安排。



Council Text Phone Number  
01738 442573

Astron B35914 6/05 2005557



safer  
scotland  
SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE



## Are you a private foster carer?

Private fostering is the term used when a parent or guardian places a child under school leaving age in the care of someone else who is **not** a close relative or officially approved foster carer for a period of more than 28 days.

You might be a private foster carer without realising it.

For example, are you looking after a friend's child while they work away from home? Has your neighbour had trouble coping with a new baby and asked you to look after it for a few weeks? Have friends from abroad asked you to let their child stay with you while they attend school here? If so, this is private fostering and you have a legal responsibility to inform your local authority. There are many more examples and your social work department will be able to advise you if you are unsure.

The local authority has a responsibility to secure the welfare of all privately fostered children so they need to carry out a number of checks.

The most important aspect of private fostering is the safety and welfare of the child and these reports and checks are there so that the Social Work Department can provide you with any advice and support you might need.

This leaflet only deals briefly with some of the duties of carers and parents. There are other duties in relation to care and education and other aspects of the child's welfare. This leaflet is intended as guidance - it is not an authoritative statement of the law. The courts ultimately decide how the law should be interpreted.

So, if you think that you might be, or are soon to be, a private foster carer, or if you are a parent or guardian who intends to place your child in someone else's care, please read the guidelines in this brochure.

Your local authority can then help you ensure that the child is safe, happy and secure, no matter what their circumstances.

## Responsibilities of Parents or Guardians

If you are a parent or guardian and you intend placing a child under school leaving age in someone else's care, who is not a close relative or an approved foster carer, for more than 28 days, this is what you should do:

- **At least two weeks** before the placement begins, you should contact your local authority Social Work Department and let them know what you intend to do.
- If the child has been placed in someone else's care in an emergency, you should contact the Social Work Department **within seven days** of the emergency.
- You should give the Social Work Department certain information in writing; this will include where the child will be placed, who will be responsible for their care and any other information which the Social Work Department requires from you.

## Responsibilities of Carers

If you are planning to take someone else's child into your care for more than 28 days who is under school leaving age and not closely related to you, this is what you should do:

- **At least two weeks** before the placement begins, you should contact your local authority Social Work Department **in writing** and explain what you intend to do.
- If the child is placed with you in an emergency, you must let the Social Work Department know within seven days of the placement.
- If you change address while caring for the child, you must inform the Social Work Department in the area you are moving from **and** the area you are moving to.
- If the child dies, or is removed from your care, you should inform the local authority Social Work Department within 48 hours.

## Private Fostering - Frequently Asked Questions

**If private fostering is a private arrangement, why is there legislation?**

The legislation governing the care of children in private fostering arrangements is there to protect the welfare of the child. This is the most important aspect of any private fostering arrangement. Local