

WOLVERHAMPTON SAFEGUARDING TOGETHER

7 MINUTE BRIEFING: Private Fostering



What is Private Fostering?

The Children Act (1989; 2004) and the Private Fostering Arrangements 2005 state: 'A child is deemed to be privately fostered if they are under the age of 16 (18 if they are disabled) is being cared for by someone other than their parent, sibling or close relative, without the involvement of the Local Authority.' The arrangement must be for 28 days or more, either concurrently or with short breaks in between.

Notification of Private Fostering

Birth parents have a duty to inform the Local Authority of a private fostering arrangement between 6-13 weeks before the arrangement begins. If no prior notification is given, private foster carers must notify the Local Authority within 48 hours of the arrangement beginning. Professionals and any other person should also notify the Local Authority of Private arrangements. Notification of Private Fostering arrangements should be sent to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) - **01902 555392**.

Key points to help identify these arrangements:

- Privately fostered children are not children in care.
- The arrangement is made between the parent (or person with parental responsibility) and the private foster carer.
- A close relative is an adult sibling, grandparent, or immediate aunt/uncle

Serious Case reviews: key learning

Victoria Climbié was Privately Fostered and came to significant harm; remind us that working together is imperative to keep children and young people safe.

Parental Responsibility (PR)

The arrangement is made between the parent (or person with parental responsibility) and the private foster carer. Private foster carers do not have parental responsibility.

Without Parental Responsibility you cannot:

Change the child's name; Change the child's school; Move the child to another family; Move with the child to another part of the country; Take the child overseas without receiving the parent's permission; Allow the child to have serious medical treatment without receiving the parent's permission, unless it is an emergency, in which case a doctor will decide.

PR Continued....Private Foster Carer(s) have responsibility for the day to day care of the child. The overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of child remains with the parent, or other person with parental responsibility. Private foster carers do not have parental responsibility which means they cannot give consent to decisions affecting a child's health or education.

