

What happens if I am a private foster carer?

You are required by law to inform North East Lincolnshire Council that you are caring for someone else's child if this arrangement is to continue for more than 28 days.

We will seek your consent to undertake certain checks and visit your home to speak to you and the children involved.

We will undertake an assessment of the arrangement and provide you with ongoing support to meet the needs of the children you are looking after.



Contact North East
Lincolnshire Council's
integrated front door to talk
to us about private fostering.
Call 01472 326292.

PRIVATE FOSTERING

Are you caring for someone else's child?



What is private fostering?

Private fostering is an agreement for a child to live with carers, reached directly between parents and a person caring for a child that is not their close relative. Where it is proposed that a child live with someone that is not a 'close relative' for more than 28 days, this is known as private fostering.

What is a close relative?

A close relative is a parent, step-parent, grandparent, sister, brother, aunt or uncle. If a child is being cared for by someone is not a close relative for more than 28 days, with the agreement of their parents, this is private fostering.



What should I do if I am caring for someone else's child? What should I do if I become aware of a child being looked after by someone who is not a close relative?

It is an offence to privately foster without informing North East Lincolnshire Council before the arrangement has begun. But we don't want you to worry and we understand that many children thrive when they are living with someone who is not their close relative. But, if you are privately fostering or intend to do so, it is important that you let us know as soon as possible by calling **01472 326292**.

If you are a member of the community, or a professional working with children, and know of a child that is privately fostered, please also call us on 01472 326292.



Why are children privately fostered?

Some families need support from friends, neighbours and relatives that are not considered 'close' by the legislation. Children can thrive when they are cared for by someone who is not their close relative, where their parents need help to care for their child. A parent might be unwell for a period of time or children may be studying or perhaps even spending an extended summer holiday with family friends.

What about parents, when children are privately fostered?

Parents must always consent to private fostering arrangements. They retain all their legal rights as parents while the arrangement continues and can decide to end it at any time. It is important to consider how parents will support private carers financially and also to think about what would happen if a child needed urgent help, for example in a health emergency.

What about older children?

Private fostering applies when children are under the age of 16, or 18 if they are disabled.

