

Private Fostering: Information for children and young people



What is private fostering?

- If you are under the age of 16 (18 if you are disabled) and your mum and dad have asked someone who is not your relative to look after you for 28 days or more, you may be privately fostered.
- The person who looks after you is called a private foster carer.

If you are being privately fostered Havering Council needs to know who is looking after you and where you are living. The law says that we must make sure that every child in Havering is safe and properly cared for, is well and happy.

Once we know you are privately fostered a social worker will come and visit you. They will make sure you are being well looked after.



The social worker will

- Make sure you are well and talk to you to see that you are ok
- Make sure your living circumstances are good
- Visit you regularly – at least every six weeks – but you can talk to them at any time
- Visit you every three months after the first year
- Talk to your carers to see if they need help and support
- Get in touch with your parent/s to make sure they know you are well and happy.

Things you should know:

You should

- Be in regular contact with your parents
- Be attending school regularly
- Be registered with a doctor
- Be able to practice your religious beliefs and observe your culture
- Feel safe and comfortable at home where you live.



Your private foster carer must

- Help you stay in touch with your family
- Make sure you are well cared for, giving you regular meals, clean clothes and your own bed
- Make sure you go to school so you can learn
- Take you to the doctor or hospital when you need it. If you need serious medical treatment your parents must agree to this. Unless it is an emergency and your parents cannot be contacted quickly then a doctor will decide what to do.
- Take you to the dentist regularly
- Make sure you have a chance to make friends, enjoy hobbies and sports that you like
- Help you follow your religion and customs that are important to you
- Respect the things that are important to you and your family – if you have religious customs like prayer times, special foods that you eat or don't eat. If different from you, your private foster carer must learn about your culture and meet people from your community who speak your language.

Your private foster carer must not

- Change your name
- Change your school
- Move you to another family
- Take you to another part of the country
- Take you to another country without asking your parents for permission.

If you are not happy where you are living you can talk to a social worker, teacher or another adult you can trust.

Contact Havering Council at:

Havering Council Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Phone: Monday to Friday (9am to 5pm) **01708 433222**

Out of hours/weekends **01708 433999**

Email: **tmash@havering.gov.uk**

www.havering.gov.uk/privatefostering

Other useful contacts:

ChildLine

If you need to talk to someone confidentially about problems you are having or worries about other children.

www.childline.org.uk

0800 1111

Action for children

Provides help for vulnerable and neglected children, young people and families.

www.actionforchildren.org.uk

0300 123 2112

Coram Children's Legal Centre

Provides free legal advice to children.

www.childrenslegalcentre.com

08088 020 008

OFSTED

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills.

www.ofsted.gov.uk

0300 123 1231



Office of the Children's Commissioner

For help and advice on your rights if you are living away from home, in or leaving care, or receiving social care services.

info.request@childrenscommissioner.

gsi.gov.uk

0800 528 0731 or 020 7783 8330

Coramvoice

Provides free advocacy and advice for children and young people in care.

help@coramvoice.org.uk

Text: 07758 670 369

