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What is a private fostering arrangement?

Private Fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (or under 18 if disabled) is being or it is intended that they are, looked after more than 28 days by someone who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility or a close relative. Private foster carers are adults from the extended family such as a cousin or great aunt/uncle. They may also be a friend of the family or other non-family person.

Who is regarded as a close relative?

A close relative is someone who is a grandparent, brother, sister, aunt and uncle (whether by full relation or through marriage or partnership), or a step-parent.

When is the arrangement not regarded as Private Fostering?

A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for him or her has done so for fewer than 28 days without a break in the care. If the child visits their parent or has an occasional overnight stay, this will not break the period of the Private Fostering arrangement as long as the intention is for the child to return to the same Private Foster Carer.

How is this different from other fostering arrangements?

A Private Fostering arrangement is different from a local authority foster placement because the local authority is not involved in making the arrangement and is not paying for the child's care.

Do you need to notify the local authority of a private fostering arrangement?

Yes. Many young people in a private fostering arrangement, parents or private foster carers are not aware that there is a legal requirement to notify the local authority of such an arrangement for their child.



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