

Caring for somebody else's child?

What you can expect from the Private Fostering Team

If you care for somebody else's child who is under 16, or under 18 if disabled, for 28 days or more, and they are not a close relative* of yours, this is known as private fostering. By law you must report this to Devon County Council.

Once you have notified us, we will follow the steps below;

- We will arrange to visit you and the young person within seven working days of them coming to live with you, or within seven working days of us being notified.
- You will be asked to complete an enhanced DBS check and will need to provide us with evidence of your identity. Everyone living in the household aged sixteen and over will need a DBS check.
- We will ask your permission to make medical checks with your GP to confirm they have no concerns about you caring for somebody else's child.
- We will ask you to provide the names of two referees (not family) who have known you for two years or more, and who will be able to comment on you as carers and members of the community.
- We will check our records to see if you have been known to us in the past, in what circumstances, and whether there have been any concerns about you caring for a child.
- We will take some time to get to know you and your family, your experience and knowledge and what has motivated you as a family to care for somebody else's child.
- We will talk to the child you are caring for alone about their experience of living with your family, whether they have any concerns about staying with you, or more general things.
- We will talk to you and the child's parents about financial provisions, consents for medical treatment, educational matters and general day to day arrangements. The child's parents retain parental responsibility and overall responsibility for the child.

- We will then summarise our findings in a report with a recommendation to agree or not the arrangement. You will be able to comment on this report before it is presented to the fostering panel. They along with the agency decision maker will make the final decision to agree the arrangement or not. If agreed we will visit you and the child every five to six weeks.

Throughout this process we are available to offer advice and support to you as necessary. We will always offer a listening ear to you, your family and the child you are caring for, to talk through any issues you may have.

Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns regarding the process. You can contact the Private Fostering Team on 0345 155 1071 or email privatefostering@devon.gov.uk

*Close relatives include parents, grandparents, step parents by marriage, aunts, uncles and legal guardians BUT NOT cousins, great aunts, great uncles, or family friends.