

Are you looking after someone else's child? This could be private fostering.

Private fostering is when a child or young person under the age of 16 (or under 18 if disabled) is cared for, and provided with accommodation for 28 days or more, by an adult who is not a close relative. Close relatives include aunts, uncles, step-parents, grandparents, siblings and step-siblings.

Often people may not know what they are doing is considered private fostering, and they may just view it as helping out a friend in need. Although a private fostering arrangement can be a positive response from friends and the local community to a family in need of support, any child separated from their parents is potentially vulnerable and we all have responsibilities to ensure the alternative care they receive meets their welfare and safety needs.

The Local Authority should be notified 6 weeks prior to this arrangement taking place, and if it is already happening they need to be notified immediately.

Please let us know should you believe you may be private fostering or know somebody who is. For more information please see below:

<https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/article/5211/Are-you-caring-for-someone-elses-child>

<https://hillingdonsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/professionals/useful-guidance/private-fostering/>