

# Are you caring for somebody else's child?

If you think you, or someone you know, is involved in a private fostering arrangement, or you need advice, please get in touch with

**Croydon Children's Services Single Point of Contact on 0208 726 6400**

You can also email:  
**[privatefostering@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:privatefostering@croydon.gov.uk)**

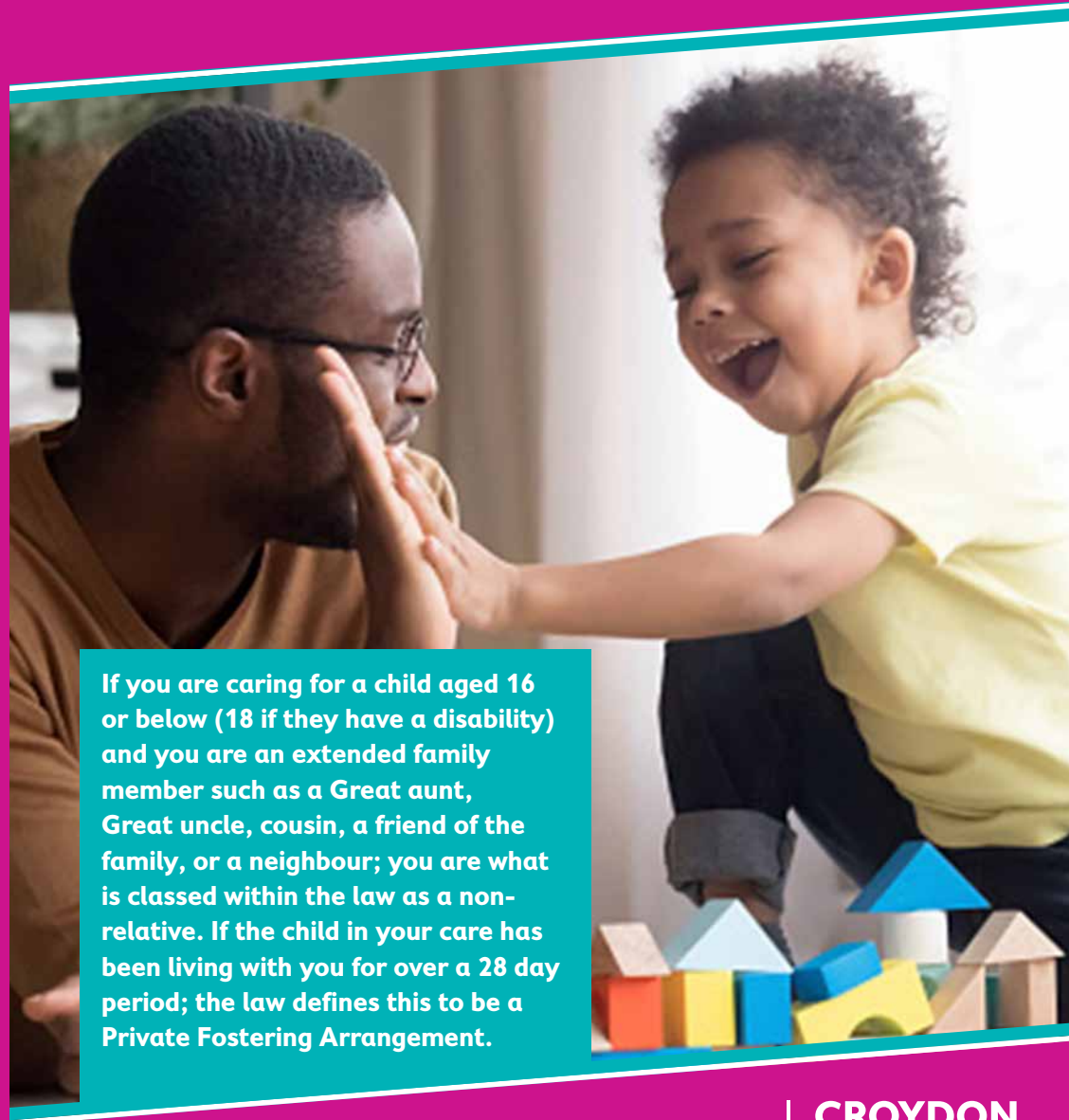
Website with useful resources to support you within your role as a Private Foster Carer:  
**[www.croydonlcsb.org.uk](http://www.croydonlcsb.org.uk)**

**Croydon Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub**

Bernard Weatherill House | 8 Mint Walk | Croydon CR0 1EA

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 @yourcroydon



If you are caring for a child aged 16 or below (18 if they have a disability) and you are an extended family member such as a Great aunt, Great uncle, cousin, a friend of the family, or a neighbour; you are what is classed within the law as a non-relative. If the child in your care has been living with you for over a 28 day period; the law defines this to be a **Private Fostering Arrangement**.



## Are you caring for someone else's child?



- ✔ A child who is not closely related to you? For example your cousin's child or a great niece or nephew?

Are you caring for them because:

- ✔ They are not getting on with their parents. There have been lots of arguments and they have asked to stay for you for a while.
- ✔ You are close friends with their parents and consider yourself to be family; although you are not a blood relative. Have they asked you to care for their child?
- ✔ Their mum or dad is in hospital or they are unwell.
- ✔ Their mum or dad are away for over 4 weeks or they work long/unsociable hours.
- ✔ They are an international student studying at a language school or mainstream school.

**If you answer yes to any of these, you are in a Private Fostering Arrangement.**



## What is private fostering?



If you are not a close relative (like a parent, sister or brother to the child's mum or dad) - perhaps you are a cousin or great uncle or aunt, and a child stays with you for 28 days or longer, the law calls this Private Fostering. The law says that Croydon's Children's Social Care have to be told about every child or young person who is privately fostered and living in the borough.

The Private Fostering Assessment must be completed within 42 days after you have notified us of the arrangement.

The difference between Private Fostering and Foster Care is that when a child is privately fostered, social workers do not arrange where the child lives, but they do have to make sure it is safe. Foster Care is arranged by social workers when children can't live at home and this is called being Looked After (previously called being in care).



## What is expected of me as a Private Foster Carer?



- You are expected to treat the child in your care as if they are your own.
- You are expected to make sure that you give them regular meals and that they have clean clothes.
- Make sure they have their own bed.
- Make sure that they go to school.
- Make sure the child regularly sees the dentist and opticians.
- Register them with a GP and support them with accessing medical treatment if needed.
- Help them to enjoy sports and hobbies.
- Help and encourage them to stay in touch with their family.
- Help them to follow any religion or customs that are important to them.



## Will their mum and dad still be responsible for their child? Are they expected to remain involved?



- The child's parents are still legally responsible for their child and should stay in contact with you.
- The child's mum or dad will still have to give permission for significant things in their child's life like changing schools, going on holiday or having serious medical treatment.
- If the Private Fostering Arrangement is agreed to be safe by the Social Worker and they are happy with the care that you are providing to the child, the social worker will continue to visit you up to every 6 weeks for the first year; and after that, every 12 weeks.



## Will I be provided with support?



- It is a private arrangement, so it is expected that the child's parents provide you with financial support and practical support if needed.
  - As a private foster carer, it is Croydon's Children's Social Care's duty to make sure that you are able to provide safe care to the child that is living with you. It is Croydon's Children's Social Care's duty to also support and monitor this arrangement.
- Support can include:**
- Writing letters to schools or other agencies to confirm that you are a Private Foster Carer.
  - Support with applying for welfare benefits like Child Benefit, Tax credit and Housing Benefit.
  - Support with accessing other services in the community that might be helpful, ie family centres and other activities.