

Are you living with someone who is not your Mum or Dad?



You may be being privately fostered

What is private fostering?

If you're under 16 (or under 18 if you have disability), private fostering is when you live with someone for more than 28 days who is not a close member of your family.

What is the difference between a private foster carer and Sutton Council foster carers?

If a young person needs to 'in care' (looked after by the Council), a social worker arranges for them to live with a foster carer approved by Sutton Council.

Private foster carers are not approved by the Council. Your parents, or someone on their behalf, chose them to look after you. But, we have to assess that this is safe for you.

Why don't I live with my parents?

Parents sometimes struggle, and to make sure you're okay while they sort out their difficulties they have asked someone they trust to look after you.

Or perhaps your Mum and/or Dad live in another country and want you to have your education in this country.

Or it may be because your Mum and/or Dad has gone into hospital and cannot look after you at the moment.

What happens if I am not happy living here?

Speak to an adult you trust. You could tell your Mum and Dad when you speak to them, or tell your teacher, or social worker, or someone else you trust.

When do I go home?

This will be arranged between your parents and carer.

Who will know I am privately fostered?

Not everyone! Your school and class teacher will need to know and your doctor. They will tell us as you are protected under law, but they won't tell anyone else unless there are very good reasons for them to do so. They will not tell your friends of classmates.

You might want to tell people, perhaps your close friends, and that's okay.

What happens now I am living with a private foster carer?

Your Mum and Dad are in touch with your social worker to tell them what is happening and who you are living with.

Your social worker will try to make sure you have regular contact with your Mum and Dad.

What does a social worker do and why do I need one?

Your social worker will visit you regularly to talk to you. They will check you are happy where you are living and that you are being cared for. They will make sure you are safe.

If you have any problems with the person you are staying with, you can tell your social worker and they will help you.

Your social worker will also help your private foster carer, if they need advice.

You can contact your social worker at:

Sutton Civic Offices, St Nicholas Way, Sutton, SM1 1EA

0208 770 6001