

# Private Fostering Arrangements

## Information for Professionals

**“By working together with agency partners, we will ensure that every child in Bromley has the right help at the right time to keep them safe, and to meet their needs, so that they achieve, thrive and reach their full potential.”**

***The Roadmap to Excellence—  
Delivering Better Outcomes  
for Children and Families  
(2018)***



### Contact Information:

If you would like to **inform** us about a private arrangement, or for more **information** please contact:

#### **MASH Team**

T: 020 8461 7373

E: [mash@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:mash@bromley.gov.uk)

#### **Emergency Duty Team**

T: 0300 303 8671

### Private Fostering is.....

When a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if they are disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a close relative for **28 days or more**.

Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts.

To qualify as private fostering, the arrangement has not been made by the local authority, and the child or young person is not being looked after by an approved foster carer.

### If I am aware of private fostering, what do I need to do?

Often professionals are the first people to become aware of children living away from their parents, and some of these children will be living in private fostering arrangements.

Many private foster carers are excellent and safe, but if the local authority is unaware of the arrangement, they are unable to offer any support. Therefore, if you are aware of a private fostering arrangement, you have a duty to notify the local authority, by contacting our MASH Service.

Everyone working with children and families has an important role to play in safeguarding the welfare of vulnerable children.

### How do I recognise a privately fostered child?

The following questions have been designed to help you establish whether a child is privately fostered.

Is there anything unclear on files or records about the child's living arrangements?

Is the child living with someone other than a parent, someone with parental responsibility or a relative?

Do you know what the child's living arrangements are (who with, for what purpose)?

Is it clear who the child is living with, and what relation the person is to the child?

Has the child been living, or is likely to live, away from home for more than 28 days, or a series of days totalling 28 days or more?

## Bromley's Private Fostering Lead Professional

Godwin Munzara

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## What does the local authority do?

Bromley have a duty to make sure all Private Fostering Arrangements are safe and suitable for children/young person.

Once a notification is received of a prospective private fostering arrangement, a social worker will arrange to carry out the following checks within seven days to establish whether the arrangement is suitable:

- Visit the premises where it is proposed that the child will be cared for and accommodated
- Visit and speak to the proposed private foster carer and people living with the foster carer
- Visit and speak to the child alone to ascertain the child's wishes and feelings unless the officer considers it inappropriate speak to and, if it is practicable to do so, visit the parent or person with Parental Responsibility for the child
- Investigate any other matters the social worker believes to be relevant such as whether an agreement for financial arrangements and for the care and maintenance of the child have been reached, arrangements for the child's education etc.

The social worker must ensure that the intended duration of the fostering arrangement is understood and agreed by both the parents of the child and the proposed private foster carer.



Download

'Bromley Private Fostering Awareness App' on your mobile, available for both Apple and Android devices



## What is Private Fostering?

Is the child living with someone other than their parent/has parenting responsibility or close relative?

Is that person the child's step parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (including by marriage)?

Yes No

This is **unlikely** to be a private fostering arrangement

Yes No

Is the child under the age of 16, or if they have a disability, age 18 or younger?

This is **unlikely** to be a private fostering arrangement

Yes No

Have they or will they be living in this arrangement for 28 days or more?

This is **unlikely** to be a private fostering arrangement

Yes No

This is **unlikely** to be a private fostering arrangement

This **IS likely** to be a private fostering arrangement, please notify Bromley's MASH service.

