

## PRIVATE FOSTERING PRACTICE GUIDANCE

**This guidance is to help practitioners achieve compliance with the private fostering regulations and to ensure all aspects of the guidance are achieved for this vulnerable group of children.**

Upon receiving notification that a child/young person is living in a privately fostered arrangement the following tasks must be completed **BEFORE** the 7 day visit to the child in their placement.

Action Required	By when?	Additional actions/concerns
<p><b>CREATE CONTACT RECORD</b></p> <p>Clearly record on the contact form the reason for the and the likely duration of the arrangement.</p> <p>Take full details of the child, private foster carer and birth parents. Create a record on LCS for both the carer and the child.</p> <p>If the child is already known only the carer needs to be created.</p>	<p><b>Same day as Notification is received</b></p>	<p>Give consideration to the needs of any siblings who may remain in the care of parent and if further assessment is required.</p> <p>All children subject to the PF arrangement will need a new or updated SA to be completed alongside the PF assessment as the PF assessment is an assessment of the carer's capacity to meet the child's needs whereas the SA is an assessment of child. PF assessment needs to be on carers file.</p>
<p><b>INITIAL SOCIAL CARE RECORD CHECKS</b></p> <p>Complete initial social care record checks on the child, birth family and the private foster carers</p>	<p><b>Same day as Notification is received</b></p>	<p>Social Care Records Search reveals concerns:</p> <p>Private Foster Carer is not deemed to be suitable and/or the premises are unsuitable. Discussion with parent to make an alternative arrangement.</p> <p>Is already a Disqualified Person (Foster Carer) is a good reason upon which to seek a prohibition. Refer to Point 10 of the Private Fostering Procedures for further information.</p> <p>If Child Protection concerns arise follow Child Protection</p>

		<p>Procedures.</p> <p>Where the social worker considers that it would be appropriate to allow a child to remain with a private foster carer pending the outcome of the PF assessment despite the fact that he or she or a person in the household is disqualified, a written report must be presented to the Designated Manager for consideration.</p>
<p><b>MAKE INITIAL CONTACT WITH PARENTS/PRIVATE FOSTER CARERS AND AGENCIES</b></p> <p>Make contact with persons who hold PR for the child, complete a visit within the 7 days. Explain your role is to assess the suitability of the placement. Check they are aware/consent to the placement. Gain consent to undertake agency checks on child with health and education.</p> <p>Arrange another visit to parent(s) (could be outside of the 7 day timeframe) and complete PF Paperwork. This includes signing the PF Agreement and Medical Consent Forms. A copy of the signed Medical Consent form should be given to PFC, and health services. Provide parents with a copy of the 'what you need to know leaflet'. Record clearly on LCS.</p> <p>Make contact with the Private Foster Carer and arrange a visit to see the child in their placement <b>within 7 days from Notification</b>. Advise PFC child will need to be seen alone including their</p>	<p><b>Between day 1-3 of notification</b></p> <p><b>Visit to take place before the initial 28day review.</b></p>	<p>Parent unaware you will need to rule out abduction/trafficking concerns.</p> <p>Parental consent not given, advise they need to make alternative arrangements for their child and if required seek legal advice (for example in circumstances where parent is not agreeing to placement but is not actively making other arrangements their agreement may be legally assumed). Record any discussion with Legal Services clearly on child's record.</p> <p>If contact cannot be made with persons with PR as they have left the country, or whereabouts unknown seek legal advice and discuss with Team Manager if this is a case of child abandonment.</p>

<p>sleeping arrangements. Explain that an assessment will be undertaken and DBS Checks required on PFC and other people aged 16 and over living in the household, request supporting identification documents are made available at the initial visit.</p> <p>Take the DBS form and fill it in on first visit to private foster carer- <b>do not leave with carer as this creates delay in timescales</b></p> <p>Complete agency checks with health and education and clearly record on child's file.</p>	<p><b>Between day 1-3 of notification</b></p> <p><b>Between day 1-3 of notification</b></p>	<p>Should private foster carer refuse to engage with assessment explain that they cannot be recommended to be suitable to care for the child and advise parent will be asked to make alternative arrangements. Alert with Team Manager.</p>
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An **initial visit must be undertaken to the child in their placement within 7 days of notification.** During this visit the following actions are to be undertaken:

Action Required	By when?	Additional actions/concerns
<p><b>DURING THE INITIAL 7 DAY VISIT</b></p> <p>Refer to Section 4 of the Private Fostering</p>	<p><b>Within 7 days of</b></p>	

<p>Procedure for detailed guidance.</p> <p>Explain PF process and provide PFC (private foster carer) with Leaflet 'what you need to know'. Advise PFC that they have the right to have access training that is available to Local Authority Foster Carers and this will be assessed as part of the PF arrangement. Ensure you discuss financial arrangements and inform carer that the LA is not involved in financial support for private fostering arrangements- it is between carer and parent.</p> <p>Obtain written consent for DBS Checks for all person(s) over the age of 16 living in the household or frequent visitors. Take the DBS form and fill it in on first visit to private foster carer- <b>do not leave with carer as this creates delay in timescales</b></p> <p>Complete case note on <b>carer file</b> with date DBS check sent off and the form ID number</p> <p>Place copy of returned checks on <b>carer's file</b> with a case note on child's record to note check returned.</p> <p><b>Please ensure no adult information is stored on the child's file as this is a breach of data protection regulations</b></p> <p>Inform PFC that they will need to provide 2</p>	<p><b>Notification is received</b></p> <p><b>During initial visit</b></p>          <p><b>During initial visit</b></p>          <p><b>To be available within 2 weeks of visit</b></p>          <p><b>In place before the 28 day Initial Review</b></p>          <p><b>During initial visit</b></p>	
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<p>written personal referees and advise visits will be undertaken to personal referees.</p> <p>Encourage PFC to draw up a written agreement with child's parents to agree on their respective expectations and responsibilities, including contact arrangements, finances. If child already placed check what these arrangements are.</p> <p><b>Speak to child alone</b>, gain their views and wishes about their placement and check suitability of their sleeping arrangements/and the accommodation. Give a copy of the 'what you need to know ' leaflet and advise child of the option to use an advocacy service to assist them with representing their views at CIN Reviews. Clearly record that this information has been given to the child.</p> <p>Speak to other members of the household alone and gather their views about the PF arrangement.</p> <p><b>RECORD INITIAL VISIT ON LCS ON the PF Pathway</b></p>	<p><b>During initial visit</b></p> <p><b>Within 24 hours of notification if possible or 1-3 days.</b></p>	<p>If Social Worker considers it is not appropriate to see child alone the reason should be recorded and brought to the attention of the team manager;</p>
<p><b>OPEN THE PRIVATE FOSTERING PATHWAY</b></p>	<p><b>Within 24 hours of notification</b></p>	
<p><b>CONTACT CINRO TEAM TO BOOK AN INITIAL 28 DAY REVIEW</b></p> <p>Once meeting is agreed send out invitations to</p>	<p><b>Within 24 hours of notification</b></p> <p><b>3-4 days</b></p>	

child, parents, private foster carers and all involved agencies.		
<p><b>DEVISE AN INITIAL CHILD IN NEED PLAN AND COMPLETE CIN REVIEW REPORT</b></p> <p>Share the report and plan with the PFC, Child (where appropriate) and parents.</p>	<p><b>At least 2 days before the Review</b></p>	<p>For some YP where we haven't had previous involvement there is an LCS issue here as the review pathway requires completed SA. In these cases reports are usually provided in word to CINRO and LCS is caught up once assessment are completed.</p>

The Assessment of the Private Fostering Arrangement should then be started and completed within 42 working days. Within this timeframe visits should also be conducted to the personal referees of the private foster carer.

Once the assessment of the Private Fostering Arrangement is complete this must be approved by the Team Manager to confirm suitability of the placement. The suitability of the Private Foster Carer should be reviewed annually by the Social Worker and reported to their Team Manager. The updated private fostering assessment should be clearly recorded on the Private Foster Carers File. Visits to the child must take place every 6 weeks and every 12 weeks once a child has been in their placement for over a year after consideration of placement stability and the child's wishes and feelings.

For more detailed guidance, see Derby City Council CSC Procedures, Private Fostering.