

Briefing Note

Private Fostering Responsibilities during Covid-19 pandemic April 2020

We are aware that at this unprecedented and challenging time, there may possibly be more children in our community being cared for in Private Fostering arrangements due to parental illness, isolation or other emergency situations.

Private Fostering is the term used for private care arrangements made between a parent and an adult who is **not** a close relative, to care for a child aged under 16 (or under 18 if they have a disability) for **28 days or more**. Close relatives as defined in the Children Act 1989 include: grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts and step-parents.

Private foster carers may therefore be distant relatives, friends of the family or adults previously unknown to the child.

Private Fostering arrangements are **different** to fostering placements arranged through the local authority for children who have come into care. There are particular legal responsibilities on parents, private foster carers and professionals regarding these arrangements and this will not change due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

We want to remind you to be alert to any possible Private Fostering arrangements and to notify Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) on **020 8825 8000** if you become aware of one or need advice. This will mean we can take action to check the arrangement is suitable for the child and provide any help and support needed.

Please see the link below for further information and downloadable information leaflets.

<https://www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk/kb5/ealing/directory/advice.page?id=uDwWv33gjtU>