



Rigby Hall School

Private Fostering Policy

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1. Introduction and Context.

Private Fostering is when a child aged under 16 (or under 18 if they have a disability) is cared for and provided accommodation for 28 days or more by an adult who is not a close relative.

A close relative is an aunt, uncle, step parent, grandparent or sibling, but not a cousin, great aunt/uncle or family friend.

A Private Fostering arrangement is normally organised between the parent and the carer. There are many Private Fostering situations. These may involve children:

- Who are sent to this country for education or health care by their birth parents from overseas;
- Whose parents work or study long or antisocial hours;
- Who are living with a friend's family as a result of parental separation, divorce or arguments at home;
- Who are living with their partner's family.

1.1 Our responsibilities

Rigby Hall School fully recognises its responsibilities for understanding Private Fostering to know how to identify a child who may be in a Private Fostering arrangement and to have a duty to report this to the Local Authority if it is believed the child is possibly living in such an arrangement.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Worcestershire Guidance to Private Fostering, found at the end of this policy.

1.2 Our Policy

Under the Children's Act 1989, the Local Authority has a duty to make sure the arrangement that the child is in will provide for the child's needs and safeguard his or her wellbeing.

Rigby Hall School will ensure all staff, governors and volunteers in the school are aware of this duty.

If a member of staff, governor or volunteer becomes aware that a child may be living in a Private Foster arrangement it is the responsibility of that person to report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and this person may need to make further enquiries to try and establish this.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should seek advice from Children's Social Care as to whether the child is a Privately Fostered child under the regulations. If so, a referral must be

made to children's social care through the Family Front Door. The Kinship Fostering team phone number is 01905 844536.

Essential information for making a referral includes:-

- Full names and dates of birth for the child;
- Address and daytime phone numbers for the current carer, including mobiles;
- The child's address and phone number;
- Whereabouts of the child (and siblings);
- Child and family's ethnic origin;
- Child and family's main language;
- Actions taken and people contacted;
- Special needs of the child including need for an accredited interpreter, accredited sign language interpreter or other language support;
- A clear indication of the family's knowledge of the referral and whether they have consented to the sharing of confidential information;
- The details of the person making the referral.

Other information that may be essential in a referral about a possible Privately Fostered child:

- Address and daytime phone number of the parent / parental responsibility holder;
- Address and phone numbers of any other family members;
- Any other helpful information about the parent / parental responsibility to assist an understanding of why this child is not living with them.

Rigby Hall School will work together with the Local Authority to help safeguard and promote the child's safety and welfare.

2 Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

All staff, volunteers and governors have responsibility for the following:

- To ask parents / carers questions about their relationship with the child if this is unclear, confusing or concerning.
- To follow up any discussion with a child about their living arrangement which is unclear, confusing or concerning.
- To have robust consent / trips / outings letters which clearly define the relationship to the adult giving consent.

If a child is living in a Private Fostering arrangement:

- To work with the Local Authority to ensure the child's needs are being met, to monitor and report to ensure the safety and welfare of that child whilst being Privately Fostered.
- To assist with advising and supporting the carer to undertake their duties whilst the child is living in such an arrangement.

3 Management of the policy

The Designated Safeguarding Lead / Deputies will become familiar with this policy and ensure that all staff, governors and volunteers are aware and familiar with the legal requirements and duties.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead / Deputies will endeavour to read and provide information on Private Fostering to school staff on a regular basis.

The Head Teacher will ensure that Private Fostering forms part of the staff safeguarding induction and is used in safeguarding training in the school.

The Head Teacher will report on issues relating to Private Fostering and any impact for the school to the Governing Body.

The Governing Body will oversee the policy, ensure its implementation and review its content on an annual basis in line with S175 Safeguarding audit.

Useful links

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/privatefostering>