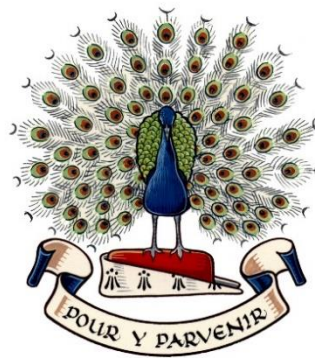


LADY MANNERS SCHOOL

PRIVATE FOSTERING POLICY



1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Most children and young people spend some time away from their home staying with relatives and friends. In cases where children/young people may stay for longer period of time special procedures may apply.

Private Fostering is an arrangement made by the parent with the carer who has agreed to look after the child/young person on their behalf. They are not arranged by the local authority. In some circumstances the parents may not have agreed or the circumstances of their living arrangements raises health, welfare and/or safety concerns for the child/young person.

Private fostering arrangements can be a positive response from within the community to difficulties experienced by families. Privately fostered children remain a diverse and potentially vulnerable group.

1.1 Definition

A privately fostered child is a child under 16 (or 18 if Disabled) who is cared for by an adult who is not a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, step parent (including civil partnerships), sister or brother, and may be a family friend, or neighbour and where the child is to be cared for in that person's home for 28 days or more. The definition does not include a step-grandparent or great grandparent. This arrangement does not have to be continuous.

A child who is Looked After or placed in any residential home, hospital or school (where they are receiving full-time education) is excluded from the definition.

In a private fostering arrangement, the parent retains Parental Responsibility.

1.2 Our Responsibilities

At Lady Manners School we fully recognise responsibilities regarding Private Fostering, ensuring that staff are fully aware about how to identify a child/young person and the circumstances around Private Fostering. This includes a duty to report any possible arrangement to the Local Authority if it is believed the child/young person is possibly living in a Private Fostering arrangement.

This policy should be read in conjunction with "How to Identify a Privately Fostered Child" Appendix A, and more information guidance can be found on the [Derbyshire County Council website](#).

Furthermore, we will follow the procedures set out by the [Derbyshire Safeguarding Children's Board, section 1.6.8](#):

1.3 Our duties

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

Lady Manners 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 or young person may be living in a Private Foster arrangement it is the responsibility of that person to report this to the Safeguarding Designated Person and this person may need to make further enquiries to try to establish this.

The Safeguarding Designated Person should seek advice from Children's Social Care as to whether the child or young person is a privately fostered child under the regulations. (The Derbyshire professional advice line can be contacted on 01629 535353) If so, a referral must be made into Call Derbyshire (Starting Point) using the online contact/referral form. If there are immediate concerns for the child's welfare and safety, we will treat this as a child protection concern and contact Call Derbyshire (Starting Point) on 01629 533190.

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;
- Relationship to the child e.g.- neighbour, friend, extended family member (by definition of a private fostering arrangement)
- 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 or young person:

- 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 or young person is not living with them.

Lady Manners School will work together with the Local Authority to help safeguard and promote the child's or young person'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/young person if this is unclear, confusing or concerning.
- To follow up any discussion with a child/young person about their living arrangement when it is unclear, confusing or concerning.
- To have robust consent/trips/outings letters which clearly define the child's relationship to the adult giving consent.
- We will pursue any anomalies of who has parental responsibility on our school records and may then ask questions of any pupil about the nature of their relationship to that adult.

If a child or young person is living in a Private Fostering arrangement:

- To work with, monitor and report to the Local Authority ensuring the child/young person's needs, safety and welfare are being met whilst in a Private Fostering arrangement.
- To assist with advising and supporting the carer to undertake their duties whilst the child or young person is living in such an arrangement.

3. MANAGEMENT OF THE POLICY

The Senior Designated Person is familiar with this policy and ensure all staff, governors and volunteers are aware and familiar with the legal requirements, and duties.

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

The Headteacher 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 the S175 Safeguarding audit.

Appendix A**PRIVATE FOSTERING ARRANGEMENTS****How to identify a private fostering arrangement and what to do next**

It constitutes private fostering if:

- The adult is not a close relative (close relative is defined as sibling, aunt, uncle, grandparent and stepparent).
- The child has left home and has moved in with someone that the PR holder is happy for them to live with.
- The child is unaccompanied, under 16, seeking asylum and intends to live with someone within their extended family and friend network.
- The arrangement is expected to last continuously for over 28 days.
- The child is from another country and staying with a host family for 28 days or more.

It does not constitute private fostering if:

- The adult is a close relative.
- The arrangement lasts less than 28 days.

The law says:

- Parents must tell the local authority in writing, six weeks before it is due to start and 48 hours after it has begun
- School and agency duties e.g. school, and health:
- Refer any possible private fostering arrangement into the local authority.
- Be aware of any possibility of trafficking.
- Clarify whether there is a genuine link to the carer and child.

The Local Authority must:

- Carry out written assessments, visits, and reviews, similar to that of a looked after child.
- Contact and tell the parents if there are concerns about the arrangement before and during.