

# PRIVATE FOSTERING



## Information for professionals

Many professionals who work with children will come across private fostering arrangements. These could be teachers, health visitors, play and youth workers and religious leaders. They have a shared responsibility to work together to ensure that all privately fostered children are well cared for and are safeguarded from harm.

### What is Private Fostering?

Private Fostering is where parents make arrangements for their child to live with somebody else (not a close relative) for 28 days or more.

If you answer **YES** to ALL of the following questions a child you are working with or aware of is likely to be privately fostered:

- Is the child under 16 or under 18 if they have a disability?
- Is the child living with somebody who is not a close relative? – this could be a cousin, great aunt, great uncle or a family friend
- Is the child going to be living with somebody else for more than 28 days or have they already been living with somebody else for more than 28 days?

### Some examples of situations when private fostering arrangements are made:

- Parents working away from home
- Parents studying or working unsocial hours
- Illness
- Children from abroad who come to this country for education or health care
- Parental separation, divorce or arguments at home.



### Procedure for professionals to notify the local authority

All professionals are required to ensure the local authority knows about private fostering arrangements.

If you know or suspect that a child is being privately fostered:

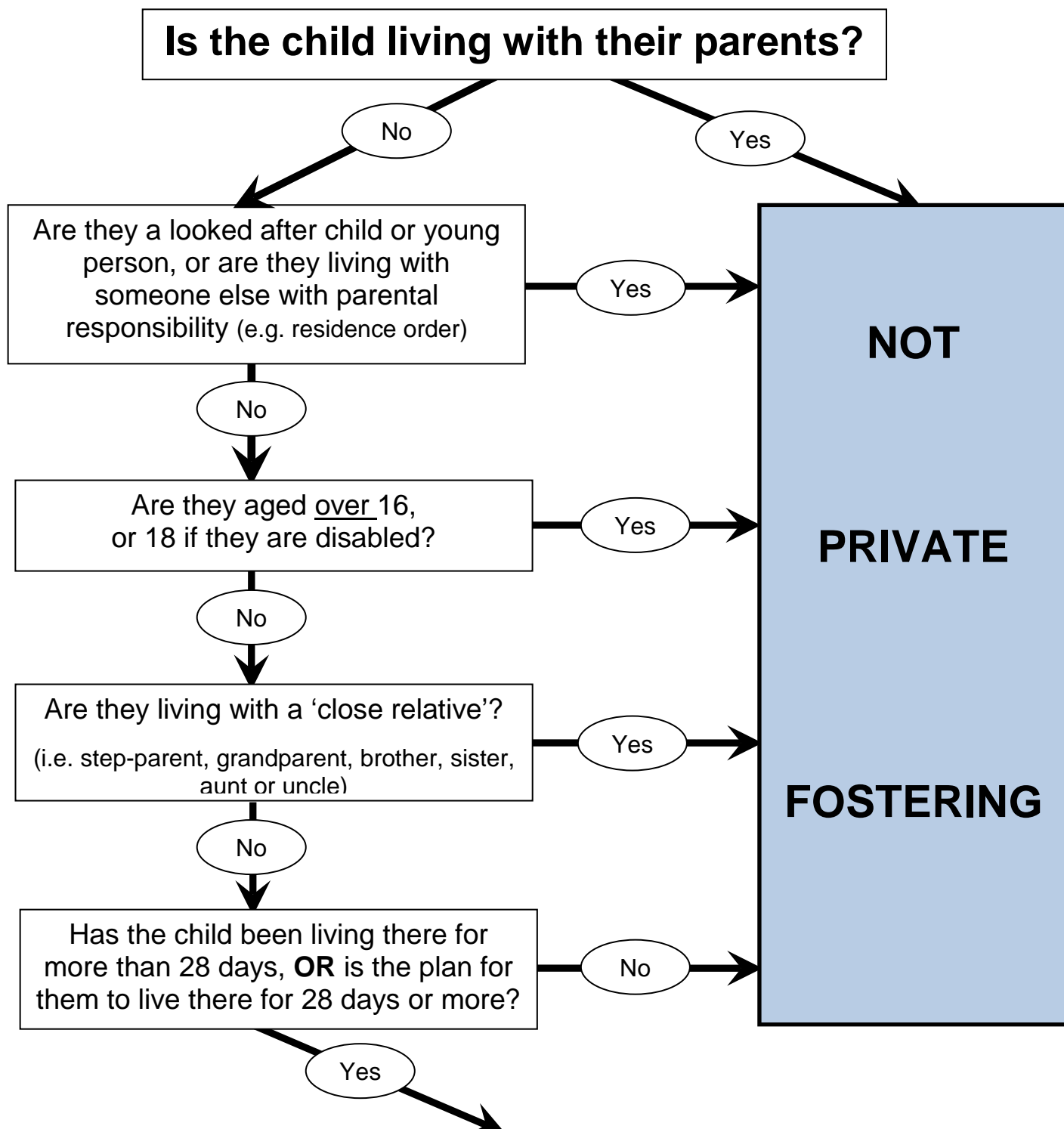
- Find out from the carer and/or parent whether they have notified the Local Authority and if they have not advise them that they are legally required to notify.
- Let the carer and parent know of your responsibility to notify the Local Authority of a private fostering arrangement.
- Whether or not the carer and parent advise you they have notified the Local Authority you have a responsibility to refer to Children's Social Care.

You **MUST** refer the case to Childrens Social Care by contacting our **Integrated Referral Team on 0191 4332653** or via the [online form](#)

### For further information about Private Fostering:

- You can contact children's social care on 0191 4332653 or access the full procedure here [http://gatesheadcs.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_private\\_fost.html](http://gatesheadcs.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_private_fost.html)
- Access Gateshead Safeguarding Children Board website: [www.gatesheadsafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.gatesheadsafeguarding.org.uk)

## Flow Chart: Is the child living in a Private Fostering Arrangement?



**THIS IS PROBABLY A PRIVATE FOSTERING ARRANGEMENT**

All professionals are required to ensure the local authority knows about private fostering arrangements

Please contact the [Integrated Referral Team on 0191 4332653](tel:01914332653) to inform them about the case