

You might want to use this space to write down some useful telephone numbers for future reference:

Ask your social worker to put their details here:

Local RMP telephone number:

Youth worker – Name and telephone number:

Teacher – Name and telephone number:

Photos in this leaflet are posed by models



**The Soldiers, Sailors,
Airmen and Families
Association – Forces Help**

For more information about SSAFA Forces Help and how we can help you and your family, please contact us:

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Registered Charity No. 210760. Est 1885
Registered Charity (Scotland) No. SC038056

Private Fostering

Information for young people

Sometimes children and young people are cared for by people other than their own families.

These arrangements are known as Private Fostering arrangements.

This leaflet explains what and who is involved in private fostering and what it means for you.

Q. What is private fostering?

A. Private Fostering (PF from now on) is when you are under 16 (18 if you have a disability) and you are living with an adult who looks after you instead of your parent(s)/carers for a period of 28 days or more. The person who looks after you will not be a relative (such as aunt, uncle or grandparent) and your mum and dad will have agreed that this person can look after you. Hopefully you too will have been involved in the decision.

Q. Why would I live with a private foster carer?

A. You may be living in a PF arrangement for a variety of reasons. Usually in a military environment it is because one or both of your parents/carers is on exercise or working away from home, or you may be living with friends to complete an important stage of your education. Sometimes it is because there are difficulties at home and a PF arrangement suits everyone best until the situation is resolved.

Q. What happens to me?

A. If you are privately fostered you will usually be living in someone else's home, although sometimes carers may be looking after you in your own home. Your parents/carers must tell the British Forces Social Work Service of the private fostering arrangement.

Q. What will the SSAFA Forces Help Social Work Service do?

A. A social worker will visit you in your private fostering arrangement to make sure that you are happy in it. The social worker will talk to you and the carers looking after you to see if any help is needed.

Q. Can I see my mum and dad/brothers and sisters/friends?

A. Yes. Your mum and dad and the person looking after you will make arrangements for you to see, write or call your mum and dad, brothers and sisters and friends.

Q. What information will be given to me before I move in with the PF carers?

A. You should be given information on the PF carers and what they will be like, you will also be told:

- if your carers have children of their own
- carers' names, address and telephone number
- your carers ages and information about them; likes and dislikes
- your social worker's name, telephone number in case you want to contact them
- how to contact the police if you need to

Q. What if I am unhappy?

A. You can talk to your parents, or your PF carer and or your social worker. Your social worker will listen to you and help you to decide how things might be made better. This might involve a meeting with your carers to help sort out the situation. If you become really unhappy then the social worker will make sure that things get sorted out even if this means changing the arrangements. Usually though most PF arrangements go very well.

Q. What if I want to make a complaint about the private foster carer(s)?

A. You should talk to a trusted adult. This could be your parents, your social worker, a teacher, youth worker, a friend's parents, or your doctor. It is always best to share your concerns with someone so that they don't become too overwhelming or scary.

