



SPRINGWELL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Private Fostering Policy

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COMMITTEE	Full Governors	AUTHOR	H Staton
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Springwell Community College

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.

If a child or young person is under 16 (or if disabled under 18) and living with a family member or friend for longer than 28 days this is then seen as Private Fostering. This does not have to be continuous; if a child/young person is staying with family members or friends that add up to 28 days or longer in any period of time this may then be seen as Private Fostering.

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. In some circumstances they may not have agreed or the circumstances of their living arrangements raises health, welfare and safety concerns for the child/young person.

1.1 Definition

A privately fostered child is a child under 16 (or 18 if disabled) who is cared for by an adult that is not a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, step parent (including civil partnership), 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. This arrangement does not have to be continuous; it may then be considered as Private Fostering.

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.

Children under 16 who spend more than 2 weeks in residence during holiday time in a school, become privately fostered children who for the purposes of the legislation during that holiday period.

1.2 Our responsibilities

Springwell Community College fully recognises its responsibilities regarding Private Fostering ensuring staff are fully aware on how to identify a child/young person and the circumstances around Private Fostering. This includes a duty to report any instances 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, found at the end of this policy, more information/guidance can be found by following this link: [Derbyshire County Council - Private Fostering](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/private-fostering)

Furthermore, we will follow the procedures as set out by the Derbyshire Safeguarding Children’s Board, section 1.6.10:

http://derbyshirescbs.proceduresonline.com/p_ch_living_away.html#priv_fostering

1.3 Our Policy

Under the Children Act, 1989, the Local Authority has a duty to make sure a Private Fostering arrangement that the child/young person is in provides for their needs and safeguards his/her welfare.

Springwell Community College will ensure all Staff, Governors and Volunteers in the college are aware of this duty.

If a member of Staff, Governor or Volunteer becomes aware that a child/young person may be living in a Private Foster arrangement it is the responsibility of that person to report the details to the School’s Designated Safeguarding Lead (SDL) who will then make further enquiries to try and establish the circumstances.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should seek advice from Children’s Social Care as to whether the child/young person is in a Privately Fostered arrangement under the regulations. The Derbyshire professional advice line can be contacted on 01629 535 353 if the child’s current residence/place of stay is in Derbyshire. If not we will make contact with the relevant local authority Children’s Services referral point.

If, upon taking advice, it is confirmed this may be a private fostering arrangement in Derbyshire, a referral will be made by the DSL into Call Derbyshire (Starting Point) using the recommended 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 533 190.

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.

Additionally, the referrer should include:

- Address and daytime phone number of the parent/parental responsibility holder and any known previous addresses
- Address and phone numbers of any other family members linked to the child in this arrangement and particularly if under 16
- Any details of anyone else involved in making this arrangement
- Any known address of the child previous to this current arrangement
- Any other helpful information regarding the parent/parental responsibility to assist an understanding of why this child/young person is not living with them.
- Details of any concern if relevant to making the referral

We will work together with the Local Authority to help safeguard and promote the child/young person's safety and welfare.

We will assist the Local Authority in their assessments and work as a partner to offer advice and support to the child and carers involved in this arrangement.

2 Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

All staff (anyone who has contact with a child or young person) including, 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.
- We will commit to reviewing, on a regular basis, the contacts and details of who has parental responsibility on our college records. We will pursue any anomalies with that parent/carer and may then ask questions of any students about the nature of their relationship to that adult.
- We will have robust consent/trips/outings letters which clearly define the child's relationship to the adult giving consent.

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

- To work with, monitor & report to the Local Authority ensuring the child/young person's needs, safety & welfare are being met whilst in a Private Fostering arrangement.

- To assist with advising and supporting the carer(s) to undertake their duties whilst the child/young person is living with them in a Privately Fostered arrangement.

3 Training

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/s will endeavour to read and cascade information on Private Fostering to college staff on a regular basis and as part of annual training/updates.

https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social_health/children_and_families/adoption_and_fostering/fostering/become_foster_carer/types_fostering/private_fostering/help/default.asp

All Designated Safeguarding Leads will undertake the DSCB Private Fostering e-learning module ensuring a copy of their certificate is held on the School Safeguarding Training Portfolio. <http://www.derbyshirescb.org.uk/training-and-resources/elearning/default.asp>

The college will display a useful poster/leaflet for staff and parents and we will include information on the college website, Appendix A & https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social_health/children_and_families/adoption_and_fostering/fostering/become_foster_carer/types_fostering/private_fostering/expect/default.asp

4 Management of the Policy

The DSL/s will ensure they are familiar with this policy regularly updating all Staff, Governors and Volunteers regarding the legal requirements, and duties.

The Headteacher will ensure that Private Fostering awareness forms part of Staff Safeguarding Induction and is included in the Safeguarding Training within the college.

The Headteacher will report on issues or impact on the school in relation to Private Fostering to the Governing body.

The Governing Body will oversee the policy; ensuring its implementation and reviewing its content on an annual basis in line with the S175 Safeguarding Audit.

Signed by:

Headteacher

Date:

Signed By:

Chair of Governors

Date: