CHURCH GRESLEY INFANT & NURSERY SCHOOL

Approach to Private Fostering

Reviewed by: Mrs E J Cripps

Reviewed date: April 2022

Next review date: April 2025

This approach to private fostering was approved by governors

Signed: ……Date: …… Minute Number:……

APPROACH TO PRIVATE FOSTERING

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 a parent with a 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.

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.

This arrangement does not have to be continuous; if a child/young person is staying with extended family members, who is not a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, step parent (Including civil partnerships), or a family friend or neighbour for example, that adds up to 28 days or longer in any period of time this may then be seen 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 for the purposes of the legislation during that holiday period.

Our responsibilities

Church Gresley Infant and Nursery school 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 procedure should be read in conjunction with "How to Identify a Privately Fostered Child" Appendix A, found at the end of this procedure and more information/guidance can be found by following this link: **https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/children-and-families/foster/fostering/become-foster-carer/types-fostering/private-fostering/private-fostering.aspx**

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

And provide to any parent/carer where it is believed the child is in a private fostering arrangement this leaflet: https://schoolsnet.derbyshire.gov.uk/keeping-children-safe-in-education/safeguarding-policies-guidance-and-protocols/safeguarding-policies-guidance-and-protocols.aspx

Our duties

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.

We 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/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 Safeguarding Designated 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 535353 if the child's current residence/play of stay in this arrangement is in Derbyshire. If not we will make contact with the relevant local authority Children's Services contact and 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead into Call Derbyshire (Starting Point) using the recommended on line 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 eg- 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.

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 addresses of the child previous to this current arrangement
- Any other helpful information eg- a chronology to assist an understanding of why this child/young person is not living with the parental responsibility holder.
- Details of any concerns if relevant to making this 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 the arrangement.

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 any pupil if the relationship is unclear, confusing or concerning.
- To follow up any discussion with any pupil about their living arrangement when it is unclear, confusing or concerning.
- We as a school will commit to reviewing, and on a regular basis our emergency contacts and details of who has parental responsibility on our school records. And will pursue any anomalies with that parent or carer, and may then ask questions of any pupil 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 and identify their status to that pupil including any legal order.

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 whist the child/young person is living with them in a Privately Fostered arrangement.

Training

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

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: https://derbyshire.learningpool.com/login/index.php

Management of the Procedure

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 Head Teacher will ensure that Private Fostering awareness forms part of Staff Safeguarding Induction and is included in the annual Safeguarding Training for teaching and non-teaching staff

The Head Teacher will report on any private fostering arrangement in their school and any 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 School Safeguarding Audit.

Appendix

Private Fostering

- is an arrangement to care for a child made between a parent and another adult.
- applies to children up to 16 years old (18 if disabled)

The law says:

Parents have to tell us in writing:

- Six weeks before it is due to start
- 48 hours after it has begun.

Any professional aware of a private fostering arrangement should Call Derbyshire on 01629 533190.

It counts as private fostering if:

- The adult is not a close relative (cousins, great-aunts and great-uncles are not close relatives)
- The child has moved in with someone that the parent is happy for them to live with
- The child is under 16, seeking asylum and intends to live with someone in their extended family and friend network
- It is expected to last more than 28 days
- The child is from another country and staying with a host family for 28 days or more.

It is not private fostering if:

- The adult is a close relative – such as a grandparent or sibling
- It lasts less than 28 days.

We must:

- Carry out written assessments, visits and reviews – like those for looked-after children. See Framework I under 'new episode'
- Be aware of trafficking. Is there a genuine link between the child and the carers?
- Tell the parents if there are concerns about the arrangement, before or during.

www.derbyshire.gov.uk/PrivateFosteringELearning

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