

**Private Care Arrangements**

**Information Sheet for Parents**

1. **What is a private care arrangement?**

This is when you arrange for your child to go and live with a relative. The Children Act (1989) says a relative is a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step-parent. This is done informally by agreement between you and the carer.

1. **What if the person who I ask to look after my child is not a relative?**

If you arrange for your child to go and live with someone who isn’t a relative, like a cousin, a great aunt or a friend, for longer than 28 days that is a Private Fostering arrangement and you have to tell the local authority. This is so we can check that the home is suitable and safe for them.

1. **What if children’s services place my child in the care of a relative or friend?**

This can happen, for example, if the parents of the child can’t be found or are not able to look after them, or if children’s services think a child is at risk of harm living with their parents.

If children’s services take the decision to place a child with relatives or friends they have to assess them as kinship or family and friends carers.

**This leaflet is about private care arrangements that you make yourself informally with the child’s relative, as per number 1 on this sheet**

1. **What support is available for a private care arrangement?**

You will be responsible for providing financial support to relatives who are looking after your children for you. The children will not be ‘in care’ but they will be ‘children in need’, and their social worker will carry out an assessment of the services they will need while being looked after by their relative.

Children’s services might assess that financial assistance is needed to help your child, but this would be at their discretion and there is no legal right to this.

1. **Further Information**

You can get further information from your child’s social worker or online at:

[GOV.UK](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/288483/family-and-friends-care.pdf)

[Child Law Advice](https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/family-and-friends-care/#:~:text=If%20a%20Family%20and%20Friends%20carer%20is%20caring,children%20and%20may%20be%20required%20to%20pay%20maintenance.)

[Family Rights Group](https://frg.org.uk/get-help-and-advice/who/kinship-carers/private-arrangement-and-private-fostering/)