

 <p>Hope Valley College Nurture - Enrich - Achieve</p>	Policy No	Version		
	Private Fostering Policy		Date issued	
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Purpose

At Hope Valley College...

We want our students to be:

- Happy, confident with high expectations
- Resilient, independent and resourceful
- Caring, friendly and compassionate
- Open-minded and adventurous with broad horizons
- Ambitious, successful leaders and team players, ready for future challenges

In a College that:

- Provides excellent teaching and a wide range of challenging learning opportunities – academically, physically and emotionally
- Values every student as an individual and is ambitious for every student regardless of their background, previous achievements, talents or individual barriers to learning
- Is nurturing, caring and welcoming
- Is reflective and always striving to improve
- Develops student and adult leadership and participation at every level
- Is a community that students, staff and parents are proud of

Introduction and Context

Most children and young people spend some time away from their home staying with relatives and friends. In cases where young people may stay for longer period of time special procedures may apply

A young person is considered to be in private fostering care of someone who is not directly related, nor is a legal guardian, for a total of 28 days or longer. The period of 28 days does not have to be continuous. If, for example, a young person regularly stays with a friend's family and this arrangement adds up to 28 days or longer, after which he or she returns to the full-time care of their parents, then this would be a private fostering arrangement. If the young person is cared for by a non-relative or legal guardian but returns to the parents at weekends this is also viewed as a private fostering agreement

This does not have to be continuous; if a 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 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 young person. The term is used to describe an arrangement made privately without the involvement of the local authority

Our responsibilities

Hope Valley College fully recognises its responsibilities regarding Private Fostering ensuring staff are fully aware on how to identify a 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 young person is possibly living in a Private Fostering arrangement.

Our Policy

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

Hope Valley College 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 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 Safeguarding Designated Lead should seek advice from Children's Social Care as to whether the young person is in a Privately Fostered arrangement under the regulations. If this is confirmed upon taking this advice a referral will be made by the **SDL** DSL to Children's' Social Care.

Essential information for making a referral includes:-

- Full names and dates of birth for the young person
- Address and daytime phone numbers for the current carer including mobiles
- The young person's address and phone number;
- Whereabouts of the young person (and siblings);
- Young person and family's ethnic origin;
- Young person and family's main language;
- Actions taken and people contacted;
- Special needs of the young person, 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
- Address and phone numbers of any other family members
- Any other helpful information regarding the parent/parental responsibility to assist an understanding of why this young person is not living with them.

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

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 young person if this is unclear, confusing or concerning.
- To follow up any discussion with the young person about their living arrangement when it is unclear, confusing or concerning.
- To have robust consent/trips/outings letters which clearly define the young person's relationship to the adult giving consent.

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

- To work with, monitor and report to the Local Authority ensuring the young person's needs, safety and 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 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.

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>

This school will display a useful poster leaflet for staff and parents and we will include information on the school website

Management of the Policy

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

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

The Principal 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:

Principal

Signed By:

Chair of Governors

Appendix 1 : How to identify a young person who is privately fostered

Is the young person under 16 years old (18 if disabled)	Yes	No The young person cannot be privately fostered
Is the young person living with a parent/person with parental responsibility or a close relative- aunt, uncle, step parent, sibling but not a cousin or great aunt/uncle?	Yes The young person cannot be privately fostered	No
Is the young person adopted or in care, subject to a special guardianship or a residence order	Yes The young person cannot be privately fostered	No
Has the young person been living with a person providing accommodation for 28 days or longer- either as a single stay or cumulatively	Yes The young person is/may be privately fostered	No

The college will:

- Ensure that their staff are aware of the regulations and ask questions about young people who are not living with a parent;
- Advise parents and private foster carers of their duties to notify the local authority and that failure to do so without reasonable excuse is an offence
- Be alert to young people who have left home or been thrown out and may be staying with a friend or be “sofa-surfing”
- Make the notification themselves if it would otherwise not be made
- Recognise the different requirements of working with, or providing services to, a young person who is being cared for by someone who may not have parental responsibility for them – especially with regard to sharing personal data or seeking consent
- Contact Derbyshire County Council for advice as necessary

If Derbyshire County Council is not aware of such arrangements, it cannot carry out its duty to ensure that they are safe and that welfare of the children concerned is being satisfactorily safeguarded and promoted.

Derbyshire County Council will:

- Check to ensure that no other person in the household will pose a threat to the child's wellbeing and confirm that any proposed arrangement can proceed/actual arrangement continue
- Ensure that all parties understand the nature of the arrangements and their respective responsibilities
- Provide practical advice and assistance to make the placement work
- Visit regularly to check that it is working and that it continues to meet the child's needs

A private fostering arrangement is one made without the involvement of Children's Social Care for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative for 28 days or more. This may include children sent from abroad, asylum seeking and refugee children, teenagers staying in short term arrangements with friends or other non relatives and language students with host families. (A close relative is defined as grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt - whether of full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership - or step-parent).

Private foster carers and those with **Parental Responsibility** are required to notify the local authority of their intention to privately foster or have a child fostered.

Teachers, health and other practitioners should notify Children's Social Care of any private fostering arrangements that come to their attention; unless they are satisfied that Children's Social Care have already been notified of the arrangement.

Children's Social Care must satisfy themselves as to the suitability of the private foster carer, their household and accommodation.

Where advance notice is given, this should be prior to the commencement of the arrangement. There are powers to impose requirements on the carer or, if there are serious concerns about an arrangement, to prohibit it.

Children's Social Care must visit privately fostered children at regular intervals (a minimum of 6 weekly visits in year 1 and thereafter a minimum of 12 weekly) to ensure that their welfare is being satisfactorily safeguarded and promoted and that private foster carers and parents are provided with any required advice. The child should be seen alone unless it is inappropriate to do so.

Children should be given contact details of the social care worker who will be visiting them while they are being privately fostered.

The Children Act 1989 creates a number of offences in connection with private fostering, including the failure to notify an arrangement or to comply with any requirement or prohibition imposed by Children's Services. Certain people are disqualified from being private foster carers.

