

# Children and Young People

## Placing Children & Young People with Family and Friends Carers

### Policy and Procedure

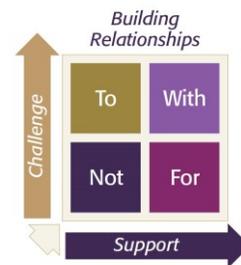
Approved by – Director of Children’s Services

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#### RESTORATIVE PRACTICE

All contact and work received by families from the City of Wolverhampton Council within the City will be based around restorative practice principles. This is to ensure we improve the life outcomes for all children, young people and families we work with. In Wolverhampton we intend to use restorative principles and behaviours with colleagues as well as children and families, to help develop positive working relationships.



<b>REVIEW LOG</b>			
January 2012	1.0	New Policy introduced.	Children and Family Support Management Team (January 2012)
January 2018	1.1	Policy reviewed.	Director of Children's Services (April 2018)
This system of recording review dates is designed to ensure staff at all times use the correct version of the up to date Policy. This system is used on all Wolverhampton City Council – Children, Young People and Families Policies and Procedures.			

<b>CONSULTATION</b>
The following people have been consulted on this policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children and Young People Management Team</li> <li>- Advanced Practitioner</li> </ul>

<b>Senior Manager who holds overall responsibility for this Policy:</b>
Head of Service – Looked After Children

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## **1.0 Introduction**

This policy sets out the arrangements of the City of Wolverhampton Council to implement the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 requirement in relation to the placement of children or young people who cannot be cared for by their parents with a Connected Person. A Connected Person is defined as a relative, friend or other person connected with a child. The term 'other person' refers to someone who would not fit the description of a relative or friend but has a pre-existing relationship with the child. It could, for example, be someone who knows the child in a professional capacity such as a teacher, childminder (refer to Family and Friends Care Statutory Guidance for LA's April 2011).

## **2.0 Policy**

- 2.1 It is a fundamental principle of legislation that children should be enabled to live with their families unless it is not consistent with their welfare. The City of Wolverhampton Council seeks to maintain children and young people within their own birth families and provide services and support to facilitate such arrangements. Where a child cannot live within his or her immediate family and the Local Authority is considering the need to look after the child, the Council will make every effort to explore potential carers within the family network who are able and willing to care for the children.
- 2.2 The City of Wolverhampton Council will provide support for any such arrangement based on the assessed needs of the child, not simply on his or her legal status and will ensure that family and friends carers are provided with support so that children do not become Looked After by the Local Authority or do not have to remain Looked After longer than is needed.
- 2.3 Where birth parent/s cannot look after their children, most families will find a solution from within their family network. In order to achieve this, families may need temporary or short term help from the Local Authority and this can be provided under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989. In line with the City of Wolverhampton Council's principles of supporting families at the earliest opportunity, the Council will support such placements, which can include the provision of financial support, to prevent the need for a child to become Looked After (see Section 17 Policy).
- 2.4 When we first become involved with a family, a family meeting should be held (see family meeting procedure). Where this is unsuccessful then a Family Group Conference should be initiated. When difficulties arise, families may need support to help them to identify resources available to them with the potential to enable children to remain within the extended family. Family Group conferences (FGC) are an effective method of engaging the support of the wider family and friends at an early stage of concerns about a child who may not be able to live with their parents. FGC should be seen as a valuable tool to engage families in

planning as soon as it is thought possible a child may become looked after. Please see [Family Group Conferences](#) Policy and Procedure.

- 2.5 Some families will set up Private Fostering arrangements to resolve their difficulties and these should be notified to the Local Authority under the Private Fostering Regulations (refer to Private Fostering Policy and Procedure).
- 2.6 Regulation 24 of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 allows the Local Authority to make an immediate placement with a Connected Person who is not yet approved as a Local Authority foster Carer whilst an assessment of the child's needs is undertaken and/or the Connected Person is being assessed as a foster carer. Where a child is subject to a Care Order or Interim Care Order they can only be placed with friends or relatives (other than parents) immediately or as a planned placement, under Regulation 24.
- 2.7 A child should only be accommodated within a family and friend's placement if it is the judgement of the Local Authority that it is necessary to safeguard and promote their welfare and this should be consistent with the wishes of the parents. The child should not be accommodated with relatives and friends approved as foster carers in order to purely provide financial support to the carers; this runs the risk of inappropriately maintaining the child within the Looked After system unnecessarily. Provision is made under the respective policies and procedures in relation to Section 17, Child Arrangement Orders and Special Guardianship Orders to provide financial assistance to children living in such circumstances. Where a child is placed under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 the Local Authority will give due regard to the wishes and feelings of the child and their parents.

### **3.0 Procedure**

- 3.1 Where a parent can arrange suitable accommodation or care for his/her child, the criteria for accommodation under Section 20 are not satisfied, Section 20(7) of the Children Act 1989 states:

“A Local Authority may not provide accommodation under this section for any child if any person who:

- a) has parental responsibility for him; and
- b) is willing and able to –
  - I. Provide accommodation for him; or
  - II. Arrange for accommodation to be provided for him”

- 3.1.1 The above section of the Children Act makes provision for a parent to arrange alternative accommodation for their child under a private arrangement and s/he has the right and choice to make these decisions. Where the Local Authority has concerns surrounding the care that a parent is giving in their own home, the parent/s should be informed that the Local Authority intends to accommodate the child unless they are willing and able to arrange suitable accommodation and

care to be provided. If the Local Authority has a role in bringing about a private arrangement then the Council must;

- a. Make the nature of the private arrangement plain to those involved;
- b. Make it plain to the person caring for the child that he/she must look to the parent for financial support;
- c. Make it clear that any financial assistance from the Local Authority will be at the discretion of the Local Authority in whose area the child is living.

3.1.2 Where a child is subject to a Care Order/Interim Care Order or accommodated under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989, the Local Authority is required to consider the placements of children with relatives or with people with whom they are familiar or connected as an alternative to being looked after by strangers. The Act states that 'unless it is not practicable or consistent with the child's welfare, the child must be placed with family and friends; (Section 23 (1,b (6) of the Children Act 1989).

## **3.2 Decision Making**

3.2.1 The decision to Look After a child will only be made after a full assessment of the child's needs and circumstances has been undertaken. This decision will not be made lightly and the social worker should give due regard to the significance of such decision for a child/young person and his/her family. The assessment will include the wishes and feelings of the child/young person and the views of the parent/carer.

3.2.2 The decision should be made on a planned basis taking into account the findings of the assessment and in consultation with partner agencies. Children becoming looked after on an emergency basis should only take place where it is clear the child is at immediate risk of harm.

3.2.3 Authorisation for a child to become looked after is via the City of Wolverhampton's Admission to Care Panel – see Admission to Care Policy. The Panel will consider all options relating to children becoming Looked After and make recommendations in the best interests of the child. A child is deemed 'Looked After' when they have been:

- Accommodated (Section 20, Children Act 1989)
- Made subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order (Section 31/38), Children Act 1989)
- Placed in Police Protection (Section 46, Children Act 1989)
- Remanded by the Court (Children and Young Persons Act 1969 and; accommodated under Section 21, Children Act 1989).

## **3.3 Placements with Connected Persons under Regulation 24**

3.3.1 The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulation 2010 places a duty under Regulation 24, in relation to the placement of children Looked After with a 'Connected Person' as detailed in part 1.1 of this document.

Regulation 24 makes provision for Local Authorities to place a child Looked After with a Connected Person in an emergency/temporary situation for up to 16 weeks subject to initial assessment and enquiries. In these circumstances the connected person is approved as a Local Authority foster carer for the temporary period. It is expected that a full assessment would be completed and presented for approval at Fostering Panel within 16 weeks of the placement commencing. In exceptional circumstances the Head of Service LAC can approve a further extension for up to 8 weeks. If the placement has not yet been approved through the Fostering Regulations after 24 weeks, the child/young person must be removed from the placement. A Connected Person approved as either a temporary or permanent foster carer for the Local Authority is entitled to a fostering allowance – see Fostering Fees and Allowances Policy. It is preferable that placements should be planned as early as possible. Provisions relating to temporary approval (Regulation 24) are intended to be used exceptionally and in circumstances which could not easily have been foreseen, when it is not possible to undertake a full foster carer assessment prior to placement.

### **3.3.2 Criteria for making a Regulation 24 immediate placement:**

- An immediate placement must be approved by the Head of Service (LAC)
- The identified placement is deemed to be in the best interest of the child;
- The suitability of the arrangements have been assessed;
- A written agreement has been signed by the carer who agrees:
  - To care for the child as if s/he was a member of the family;
  - To allow a Local Authority officer to visit at any time;
  - To keep information confidential
  - To comply with court orders and/or Local Authority requirements with regards to contact;
  - To permit the child to be removed at any time if the Local Authority decides it is no longer a suitable placement;
  - To sign agreements for checks, and Police, Health, Local Authority and Education references for all persons over 16 years who live or have regular and substantive contact with the household

### **3.4 Assessment Process for Placing a LAC with Family and Friends (Connected Person).**

#### **3.4.1 Immediate (Emergency) placement**

In emergency situations with agreement from the family we can place a child after an initial assessment (a Schedule 4) at this point the child becomes LAC.

The assessment requirements before the child may be placed with a family and friends /connected person foster carer under temporary approval are the minimum requirements for assessing the relative, friend or connected person's suitability within what may be a short time frame. Every effort must be made to

maximise the level and quality of information available to support the decision as to whether the person should be temporarily approved.

The assessment will take place in the form of a Schedule 4 for an immediate placement can be given only where the Head of Service is satisfied that:

In all the circumstances and taking into account the services to be provided by the responsible authority, the proposed arrangements will safeguard and promote the child's welfare and meet the child's needs.

The placement must be the most appropriate placement for the child, notwithstanding that the Connected Person is not approved as a local authority foster parent, and it is necessary for the child to be placed with the Connected Person before the connected person's suitability to be a local authority foster parent has been assessed in accordance with the 2011 Regulations.

The completed approval will be made via CareFirst and authorised by the Head of Service. This will then trigger to the child's social worker, the supervising social worker and the fostering administration (who will set up the service agreement for payments).

#### **3.4.2 Full assessment process as a City of Wolverhampton Council Foster Carer**

The assessment process for assessing a Family and Friend (Connected Person) as a temporary foster carer will be the Form C assessment (incorporating the 3 parts; schedule 4 (see 3.4.1), viability and the form f assessment) see Appendix B for more information

The assessment process will also include the fostering social worker assessing them as special guardians alongside this.

The full assessment process including the special guardianship assessment will then be undertaken and taken to the Fostering Panel for approval.

Once the Family and Friends (Connected Persons) carer has been approved by the Fostering Panel the child will be placed and a supervising social worker allocated. Financial support will also be payable in line with the Fostering Fees and Allowances Policy.

#### **3.4.3 Planned Process**

An assessment, to determine whether prospective family and friend (Connected Person) carers for a child can potentially meet the needs of a child are:-

- Where more than one individual or couple put themselves forward to care for a child this assessment is to be used in helping the family and the department to ascertain which potential carer might meet the child's needs. FGC could assist with this see [Section 4.0](#)

- Where an individual or couple put themselves forward as prospective carers for a child, and because of information already known about them, the local authority has serious reservations about their capacity to meet the needs of the child.
- Where an individual or couple put themselves forward as prospective carers and nothing is known about them, when a viability assessment will indicate if a full assessment is required.
- The Department has been directed by the court to assess the potential of identified relatives or friends.
- The Care Plan indicates a return to the family or family have come forward.

The initial assessment process for a family and friends carer will be in the form of a viability assessment.

This assessment is an initial “screening” to establish whether those putting themselves forward to care for a child have the potential to meet the child’s needs, and whether they should go forward for a full assessment as a Wolverhampton Foster Carer.

A viability assessment is necessarily brief but should show clear evidence of why we consider the prospective carers should, or should not, go forward for further assessment.

The assessment is designed to identify any major issues which would exclude the prospective family & friend (connected person) carers from being approved as foster carers, or to other types of family, friends and connected person carers, and ensuring that if anyone goes forward for a full assessment, there is a reasonable possibility of their being approved following due process.

As an initial screening tool the viability assessment can only be indicative of someone’s suitability.

1. The child’s Social Worker will decide whether a viability assessment should be undertaken. The Fostering Team are available where consultations are required.
2. The Social Worker will complete the viability assessment, but they may refer to the Fostering Team for consultation/advice if the situation is complex. Visits are undertaken jointly with a Fostering Social Worker.
3. The viability assessment is to be completed within **approximately 14 working days from referral**.
4. The Social Worker will complete the viability assessment and in most cases would be undertaken in one visit, and should include an interview with both prospective family & friend (connected person) carers for (if a couple) and sight of the property in which they plan to care for the child if at all possible (this may be contraindicated if the carers live out of the country).

Factual information about the carers will include:

- Names, address, dates of birth
- Language, ethnicity, religion
- Partner information (incl. health checks)
- LA checks, police checks, health information/health checks, DBS applications
- Accommodation space and available sleeping/bedroom accommodation
- Other members of the prospective carer's household – LA and local police checks
- Relationship of carer to child and to child's parents
- Availability of carers through work and other caring responsibilities
- Attitude and understanding of the role and requirement to follow care plan, contact arrangements, safeguarding
- Child's views of prospective placement
- Child's parents' views of prospective placement.
- Motivation to care for the child.

The child's social worker and their manager will ratify the recommendations of the viability assessment and will make the decision as to whether the prospective carer should then proceed to assessment.

If the viability assessment recommends that the prospective Family and Friend (Connected Person) carer should not proceed, this must be clearly evidenced and the information contained in the report confirmed with the prospective carer.

If the outcome of the viability assessment supports the proposal from the relative or friend to care for the child, the child's Care Plan also supports this, and the child is to have a planned move to carers, a referral is to be made immediately to the fostering team in which the child lives for assessment of the carers to be completed and taken to Fostering Panel within 16 weeks (see 3.4.2).

Regulation 26 of the Care Planning Placements 2010 prescribes how an assessment of Family and Friends (Connected Persons) must be conducted and requires the Fostering Service to obtain the information specified in schedule 3 of the regulations, interview at least two personal references and prepare written reports of those interviews. Please see [Approval of Foster Carers](#) Policy and Procedure for approval process.

#### **4.0 Social Work Visits to LAC placed with Family and Friends (Connected Persons)**

The child should be visited within one week of the start of the child's first placement. Thereafter, the child must be visited at intervals of not more than six weeks for the first year of any placement this is to secure the welfare of the child in placement and in line with normal visiting requirements for LAC in foster care.

Visits during subsequent years must also take place at intervals of not more than six weeks unless the placement has been formally agreed as a permanent placement which is intended to last until the child is 18; in those circumstances, the intervals between visits in the second and subsequent years of placement must not be longer than three months.

However, the frequency of visits should be determined by the circumstances of the case and the authority must arrange a visit whenever reasonably requested by a child or foster carer regardless of the status of the placement.

#### **4.1 Social Work visits to children looked after placed with Family and Friends (Connected Persons) under Regulation 24**

Where a child is placed with Connected Person carers on the basis of temporary approval under Regulation 24 the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations require that the social worker must visit the child at least once a week until the first **Looked After Review**. Thereafter the regulation requires that visits are made at intervals of not more than 4 weeks until the Carer is fully approved as a foster carer.

These frequencies reflect the greater vulnerability of the child who has been placed with a carer before the assessment of that person's suitability to care for the child has been completed. These visits will be undertaken by the child's social worker and allow an opportunity to assess how the relationship between the child and the carer is developing and identifying at an early stage where there may be concerns about the child's welfare.

#### **5.0 Supervising Social Worker Visits to the temporary Foster Carers**

The Supervising Social Worker must visit the temporary foster carer no less than 4 weeks and no more than 3 months from the point of placement until the carer is approved.

#### **5.1 Supervising Social Worker Visits to Family and Friends (Connected Persons)**

Research shows that when Foster Carers are properly supported placements for the child are more stable and the number of unplanned endings are fewer. The Fostering Supervising social worker provides support to approved foster carers by regular supervision meetings. Please see Fostering Supervision and Support Policy and Procedure ([Section 6.0](#)). Fostering support Workers also provide additional support and visiting if needed. This is found to be especially valuable for carers when they are new to fostering and is also welcomed by those carers who may have a particularly challenging placement.

All Foster Carers will have access to Foster Talk. This service offers legal expenses insurance to foster carers and their children (aged under 18): access to

free legal advice (24 hour helpline): a free stress counselling service and a medical advice helpline (24hours).

## **6.0 Involvement of child and carers in Care Planning**

In all cases, full consultation with all family and community support networks must be considered as a possible method of engaging those who know the child best, or who the child is most attached to, in considering the child's long term needs.

In all cases the child's wishes and feelings must be ascertained where possible and taken into account.

Harnessing family and community support networks in this may be particularly effective, for example, for children from black and minority ethnic groups and for disabled children.

## **7.0 Accommodation**

Family and Friends (Connected Persons) carers may need support with accommodation, as their homes may not be of sufficient capacity to suddenly take on the care of a child or possibly a sibling group of children. Consideration of support and appropriateness of accommodation will be identified and offered throughout the assessment process.

## **8.0 Support Groups**

There is a requirement under Regulations and National Minimum Standards that requires fostering services to provide foster carers including family and friends carers with such training, advice, information and support (including support outside office hours), as appears necessary in the interests of children placed with them (standards 20 and 21).

Wolverhampton offers the following supportive services:

- **Pre-approval Training**

Pre-approval training is a requirement for all carers; This is offered through the 'Skills to Foster' which is adapted to meet the needs of prospective family and friends carers. Wolverhampton also offers carers an opportunity to obtain information by holding information session, At this session, prospective foster carers are given information packs, which are built upon in the initial visits .Once a decision has been made to proceed to the assessment further information regarding the fostering task is given as part of their assessment.

- **Post approval training and support**

All approved family and friends Foster carers are required to meet the Children's Workforce Development Council [CWDC] Training, Support and Development

Standards. These standards set out the framework of development for carers over the first 2 years of approval and for Continuing Professional Development through an annual review of their personal Development Plan to ensure they undertake any development training identified. This might comprise of both mandatory, optional and refresher modules.

Additionally, Family and Friends (Connected Person) carers are subject to:

- A written foster care agreement, between Wolverhampton city council and the carer. An allocated supervising Social worker who visits every 6 weeks to assist with their training and development needs, to monitor the placement and to provide practical day- to -day advice on caring issues, or behaviour management, or difficult situations in the placement.
- A foster carer Handbook summarising policies, procedures, and practical information relevant to the fostering task is also available.
- Information on the Wolverhampton payment scheme
- Access to Foster Talk
- A Safe Caring policy, which is intended to safeguard both the looked after child and the foster carer.
- Access to fostering duty social worker 5 days each week to help in resolving matters in the absence of their social worker
- Access to Managers to help resolve more complex matters or in the absence of their supervising worker

## **9.0 Reviews of Foster Carers**

Foster carers are reviewed within 6 months of approval and then on an annual basis by Independent Review Officers. Social workers and children are given the opportunity to have an input into this process. The review must consider whether the foster carer and their household continue to be suitable.

The fostering panel receives a written report from the first review and makes recommendations which are sent to the decision maker. Written confirmation of the discussion and decision of the fostering panel is forwarded to the carer (see fostering service policy and procedures support to foster carers)

This will involve the carer meeting with the independent reviewing officer. The reviewing officer will discuss the activity of a foster carer to ensure the carer continues to be suitable to act as a foster carer, and the household is a suitable premises.

The reviewing officer will seek the views of the foster carer, the foster child (subject to the child's age and understanding) the child's social worker, the Supervising Social Worker, the Workforce Development Officer and any other relevant and appropriate personnel.

The review is also an opportunity for the carer to review the service and support given to them.

A foster home review may be more frequent if, for example, the foster carer has moved home or there is some significant change in their household.

## **Appendix A**

### **Permanence options when considering placing a LAC with Family and Friends (Connected Person) Care**

At the earliest possible opportunity discussions should take place with a family or friend/connected person around permanent options for the LAC. So that at the temporary approval stage the carer is clear and understands the options around adoption and special guardianship. The child's social worker is responsible for initiating this conversation, where required, this can be supported by the Family and Friends (Connected Person) Social Work Unit.

This is to ensure we achieve permanence through an order to ensure a normal family life for the child or young person.

See Permanence Procedure for more information.

### **Long term Fostering with Family and Friends (Connected Person)**

For children unable to return home to the care of their parents the most desirable option is a permanent placement with family or friends.

It is important to establish at an early stage whether or not family members and friends might be available to care for the child, in order to avoid the kind of delays that can happen during Court proceedings when this work has not been done.

Family Group Conference approaches may be used to empower families in decision making for their children.

Where living with family and friends is in the child's best interests, all options for achieving this without the child remaining looked after should be explored.

When a legal order is required to secure a family or friends placement, this may be achieved through Adoption Order, Special Guardianship Order, Residence Order or Care Order. Wherever appropriate the family and friends carers should be encouraged and supported to apply for a Child Arrangement Order or Special Guardianship Order. A plan to seek a Care Order and place with family or friends should only occur where this is clearly in the best interests of the child. The permanency plan should include regular reviews to consider the appropriateness of other options that will enable the Care Order to be discharged.

Where a child needs to remain looked after by the local authority, the family member or friend will need to be approved as a Family & Friends Foster (Connected Person) Carer for the specific (named) child.

In all circumstances, except adoption, the child's birth parents retain parental responsibility. The extent to which the birth parents can exercise their parental responsibility will vary with the type of legal order in force.

Where the child is no longer looked after and there is no legal order in force, the carer and child's parents are financially responsible for the child. Appropriate Benefits and Tax Credits in respect of the child may be claimed. Where an adoption, special guardianship or residence order is in force and financial support is assessed as necessary to enable and/or maintain the placement, an adoption, special guardianship or residence order allowance may be paid. The amount of the allowance paid is means-tested. Please see [Ongoing Financial Support to Secure Permanence for Looked After Children in Permanent Placement Policy and Procedure](#).

Where the child is looked after, usually the subject of a Care Order, the carer will be a Family & Friends Foster Carer and will be paid the age-appropriate fostering allowances for the child.

### **Long Term Fostering for a LAC**

Long term fostering with unrelated foster carers should only be considered where the above options of a return to birth parents, placement with family and friends and adoption have been assessed as inappropriate or have been tried without success.

Permanent fostering can offer stability through the provision of a supportive relationship and attachment into adulthood for a child. At the same time it allows attachments to parents and the child's wider family to continue. It has proved to be particularly useful for older children who retain strong links to their families and do not want or need the formality of adoption.

Please see [Permanence Policy](#).

### **Special Guardianship**

Special Guardianship aims to provide permanence for children for whom adoption is not appropriate up to the age of 17 years. It is intended to be used where the relationship between child and carer would benefit from greater legal security, but when adoption is not suitable. It addresses the needs of a significant group of children, mainly older, who need a sense of stability and security but who do not wish to make the absolute legal break with their birth family that is associated with adoption. It will also provide an alternative for achieving permanence in families where adoption, for cultural or religious reasons, is not an option.

Adoption should always be first considered for children under 10.

Special Guardianship does not end the legal relationship between the child and his/her birth parents. The birth parents remain the child's parents and continue to have shared parental responsibility for the child.

Carers being assessed as Family and Friend (Connected Person) Carers will also be assessed alongside this as Special Guardians. Panel will then approve them as a Family and Friend (Connected Person) Carer/Special Guardian.

Please see [Permanence Policy](#).

### **Residence Order**

A Residence Order may be used to increase the degree of legal permanence in a placement. It is intended for where parents feel they have a continued role to play in relation to the child, but cannot provide day to day care.

Please see [Permanence Policy](#).

### **Adoption**

If a return home or a family and friends placement cannot be achieved, adoption should be considered for all children under 10 years of age. Children aged 10 years and over may also benefit from adoption if this is in their best interests and consistent with their wishes.

Research strongly supports adoption as a primary consideration and as a main factor contributing to the stability of children, especially if under four years old, who cannot be rehabilitated to their birth parents or extended family.

Adoption offers children a legally permanent new family to which they will belong all their lives.

Please see [Permanence Policy](#).

## Appendix B: Caring for somebody else’s child – the options

	Private fostering	Family care (informal)	Family and friends foster care	Unrelated foster care	Residence order	Special guardianship order (SGO)	Adoption
Route into the caring arrangement	<p>This is a private arrangement whereby the child is being cared for for 28 days or more (or the intention is that the arrangement will last for 28 days or more) by anyone who does not have parental responsibility, and who is not a close relative.</p> <p>Relative means grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (by full blood, half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or a step parent.</p> <p>The child is not a looked after child.</p>	<p>The relative has chosen to take on the care of the child but does not have parental responsibility, and the arrangement was not made by the local authority.</p> <p>The child is not a looked after child.</p> <p>Relative may perceive the parents to be unable to care for the child;</p> <p>or the parents may be dead or otherwise not available (e.g. in prison);</p> <p>or there may be an agreement between relatives due to difficult family circumstances.</p>	<p>The child has been placed with the relative or friend by the local authority, because the person who had been caring for the child was deemed not to be providing suitable care.</p> <p>The child is a looked after child and so the local authority must approve the relative or friend as a local authority foster carer.</p> <p>The child may be accommodated voluntarily with the agreement of the parents or may be subject to a care order.</p>	<p>The child is a looked after child being accommodated by the local authority under section 20 Children Act 1989 or because the child is subject to a care order; but has been placed with a foster carer by the local authority.</p> <p>(Alternatively, the local authority may choose to place a child into residential care where this is considered to best meet the child's needs).</p>	<p>The child may be at risk of becoming 'looked after' and a friend or relative applies for an order, or</p> <p>The child may have been 'looked after' and their foster carer or other relative/friend applies for an order.</p> <p>In either circumstance, application can be made without the support of the parents or the local authority.</p> <p>Relatives may apply for an order after the child has lived with them for one year.</p> <p>Or, there can be benign reasons, e.g. after parents' death and in line with a prior agreement between the birth parents and the carer.</p>	<p>The child may be at risk of becoming 'looked after' and a friend or relative applies for an order, or</p> <p>The child may have been 'looked after' and their foster carer or other relative/friend applies for an order.</p> <p>In either circumstance, application can be made without the support of the parents or the local authority.</p> <p>Relatives may apply for an order after the child has lived with them for one year.</p> <p>Or, there can be benign reasons, e.g. after parents' death and in line with a prior agreement between the birth parents and the carer.</p>	<p>Looked after children: the LA may decide that the child should be placed for adoption. They can only do so with the consent of the birth parent or under a placement order made by a court.</p> <p>An approved foster carer can apply for an adoption order after a year of caring for the child.</p> <p>Other informal carers could apply for an adoption order if the child has lived with them for a period of 3 years.</p>
Parental Responsibility (PR)	Remains with birth parents	Remains with birth parents but the person who cares for the child may do what is reasonable to safeguard or promote the child's welfare	Remains with birth parents if child accommodated under section 20 CA, or if the child is subject to a care order or emergency protection order the local authority will have parental responsibility and determines the extent to which it may be exercised by others.		Shared by parents and holder of residence order.	PR shared with parents and any one else with parental responsibility for the child. The special guardian may exercise parental responsibility to the exclusion of all others with PR, apart from another special guardian.	Transfers to adopters and relationship with birth parents is severed.
Approval basis	The arrangement is assessed by LA, but the carer is not 'approved' as a local authority foster carer is. The arrangement may be prohibited if assessed by the local authority as unsuitable.	None	Approved as local authority foster carers in accordance with Fostering Services Regulations. (If child is looked after, carers must be approved as foster carers even if close relative.)		Appointed by court following application.	Appointed by court, following application from the applicant. LA must investigate the matter and prepare a report for the court dealing with the suitability of the applicant to be a special guardian.	Adoption agency assesses and approves prospective adopters, court makes order regarding specific child. If the child is not looked after then notice of intention to adopt must be given to the LA who then carry out an assessment / report for the court.

	Private fostering	Family care (informal)	Family and friends foster care	Unrelated foster care	Residence order	Special guardianship order (SGO)	Adoption
Duration	Subject to discretion of person with PR and readiness of private foster carer.	Subject to discretion of person with PR	So long as placement remains in line with child's care plan, as determined by LA		Age 18.	Age 18 unless varied or discharged by the court before the child reaches 18 years.	Permanent lifelong relationship
Placement supervision	It is not a placement, but there are statutory visits to child by social worker (minimum 6 weekly in first year, then 12 weekly)	None	Statutory: visits to child by social worker and supervision of foster carers by supervising social worker			None	When child is placed for adoption by the LA, the placement is supervised and there are statutory reviews. Once the adoption order is made, none.
Review of placement	It is not a placement, but the LA may do formal reviews in addition to ongoing assessment during visits.	None	Statutory reviews of child's care plan (minimum 6 monthly) and annual reviews of local authority foster carers' approval		None	None	See above
Support services	Provision of advice and support as determined necessary by the LA, which may assess the child as a child in need, with a child in need plan, and provide services / support for child/family under section 17 of the Children Act 1989	No entitlement but the LA may assess the child as a child in need, with a child in need plan, and provide services / support for child/family under section 17 of the Children Act 1989	Support to meet child's needs including health plan and personal education plan.  Training and practical support to foster carers in accordance with the Fostering services Regulations, NMS and CWDC standards.  Young person may be entitled to leaving care support services		No entitlement  (But LA has discretion to provide services / support for child/family under section 17 of the CA)	If child was looked after prior to making the SGO, LA must assess for need for special guardianship support services. LA has discretion whether to provide support.  Young person may be entitled to leaving care support services if was a looked after child prior to making of the SGO.	Entitlement to assessment for adoption support services, which may be provided at discretion of LA in accordance with Regulations and NMS.

## Appendix C: Process Map – Immediate Placement (Emergency) Regulation 24/25

