

Children, Young People & Learning



# **Family and Friends Policy and Procedures**

**Version 2.0  
September 2011**

Bracknell Forest Council  
[www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

Document name & file location	g:/Policies&Procedures/Published	
Document Author	Sarah Roberts	
Document owner	Sheila McKeand, Head of Service, Looked After Children	
Review date	This document is to be reviewed a minimum of every [number] years, the next review to occur no later than [month] [year]. Incremental reviews may take place as required.	
Accessibility	This document can be made available in hard and electronic formats. No copies in other languages are currently available.	
Destruction date	Details of destruction dates	
How this document was created	Version 1	Author and Team
	Version 2	Team / Line Manager
	Version 3	CSMT / DMT / CMT
	Version 4	Executive Briefing / Executive / Full Council / Portfolio Holder
	Version 5	Public document or Pre-print Design Circulation
Circulation restrictions	No exceptions, FOI Exempt (Delete as appropriate)	
Version	Detail of change	Name & Date
1.0	Document created	Christopher mills 2011
2.0	Review by Head of Service LAC	Sept 2011
	Consultation with stakeholders	
	CSCMT	
	publish	

## **Accessibility**

This document can be made available in large print, Braille, audio or in electronic format.

Copies in alternative languages may also be obtained.

Please contact:

Policy and Commissioning Officer

Children's Social care

Bracknell Forest Borough Council

Time Square

Market Street

Bracknell

Berkshire RG12 1JD

Email: [sarah.roberts@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.roberts@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01344 352020

Fax: 01344 351521

Minicom: 01344 352045

# Table of Contents

1	Purpose .....	2
2	Scope .....	2
3	Values and Principles .....	3
4	Legal and Policy Framework .....	4
5	Private or Informal Family and Friends Arrangements .....	4
5.1	Private Fostering .....	6
5.2	Family and Friends care (connected persons) and Looked After children .....	7
5.3	Immediate placement of a child with a family or friends carer .....	8
5.4	Placements extending beyond 16 weeks.....	9
6	Long Term Legal Options.....	10
6.1	Special guardianship orders.....	10
6.2	Adoption.....	11
6.3	Supporting Contact with Parents .....	11
6.4	Complaints and Representations .....	12
	Appendix 1 .....	13
	Definition of a relative.....	13
	Appendix 2 .....	14
	Procedures to approve Family and Friends Carers.....	14
	General 14	
	Actions required prior to placement.....	14
	Action required immediately following the child’s placement .....	15
	Action required if the child’s placement is expected to be beyond sixteen weeks.....	16
	Accountability .....	17
	Support to Carers .....	18
	Payment of Fostering Allowances to Regulation 24 foster carers .....	18
	Overlap with legal proceedings .....	19
	Notifications to carers .....	20
	Review of placements .....	20
	Appendix 4 .....	20
	Family Rights Group: Temporary Approval of a Connected Person as a Foster Carer –Part 1 .....	20

## 1 Purpose

The preferred option for every child who cannot live with their parents is to grow up in the care of their family or with an adult with whom they have an existing significant relationship.

The purpose of this document is to provide policy and procedural guidance to staff in relation to the placement of children with their relatives and friends. This document should be read in conjunction with the following related department policies:

Bracknell Forest Fostering Service Policy and Procedure, see <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/fostering-service-policy-and-procedure.pdf>

Bracknell Forest Looked After Children Policy and Procedure, see: <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/looked-after-children-policy-and-procedure.pdf>

It highlights the key principles underpinning the policy, the assessment, planning and decision making process and support services that should be available to the children and their carers. It replaces the Bracknell Forest Policy and Procedure for the Immediate Placement of a Child with Relatives or Friends.

The responsible manager for this policy and implementation rests with the Chief Officer for Children's Social Care

## 2 Scope

For the purpose of this policy Family and Friends care is defined as the full time nurturing and protection of children (living apart from their birth families) by their relatives, friends and people with whom they may have a significant connection.

It is important to note that where a child cannot be cared for by their parent(s) the family may make their own arrangements to care for the child within the family and friends network. The Local Authority does not have a duty to be involved in any such informal family and friends care arrangements unless it appears to the authority that services may be necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child or children or young person up to the age of 18 years.

Arrangements may also be made by parents for children to be cared for by friends or relatives who are not 'close' relatives. If these arrangements are to last longer than 28 days they come within the Private Fostering regulations.

'Family and Friends care' is used to describe all arrangements where the Local Authority is involved in placing a child in need and where assessments have been made that the child needs to become Looked After. Placements may be made at the request and agreement of the parent, in which case the child is 'accommodated' or through a Court process where the child is made the subject of an order and is placed in 'care'. In both these circumstances the child or young person becomes 'Looked After'

### **3 Values and Principles**

Children have a right to a family life and are entitled to live within their families unless this is not consistent with their welfare.

- If young people cannot remain at home, placement with relatives or friends should be explored before other forms of placement are considered, thus promoting a sense of continuity, stability and permanence.
- If young people have to live apart from their family of origin, both they and their parents should be given adequate information, support and advice. They should be helped to consider alternatives and contribute to the making of an informed choice about the most appropriate form of care.
- Keeping children as close as possible to their family and social culture reduces the likelihood of placement breakdown, reduces the anxiety in children of having to live with strangers in an unfamiliar environment and often results in better outcomes for the child.
- Continuity of relationships is important, Attachments should be respected, sustained and developed. Parents should be expected and enabled to retain their responsibilities and remain closely involved as is consistent with their child's welfare, even if the child cannot live at home temporarily or permanently.
- A change of home, caregiver, social worker or school almost always carries some risk to a child's development and welfare. A child's age, sex, health, personality, race, culture and life experiences are all relevant to any consideration of needs and vulnerability and have to be taken into account when planning or providing help.

- The options for a child to live with a relative or friend should be rigorously and fully explored before consideration is given to admitting a child to public care and services made available to family members.
- Processes for assessing, approving and supporting Family and Friends carers should be as rigorous as arrangements made for assessing and approving non-related carers.
- Children's welfare is best promoted when the authority is able to work in partnership with parents and other relevant agencies. All care plans should take account of parents and children's views.

## 4 Legal and Policy Framework

All local authorities have a general duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children living within their area and to promote the upbringing of such children by their families. The way in which they fulfil this duty is by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's assessed needs. [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/access-to-children's-social-care-services/pdf](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/access-to-children's-social-care-services/pdf)

### Reference

Children Act 1989

The Children Act 1989 and associated regulation and guidance

Human Rights Act 1998

Children Act 2004

Care Matters, Time for Change 2007

Children and Young Person's Act 2008

Public Law Outline, Ministry of Justice, 2008

Fostering Regulations 2011

Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010

## 5 Private or Informal Family and Friends Arrangements

Where a child cannot be cared for within his or her immediate family, the family may make their own arrangements within their own network. Young people over the age of 16 may elect to go to live with relatives, with or without their parents consent..

In most respects the primary responsibility for any private placement resides with the parent. This is absolutely the case where the child is placed at the parent's own initiative in circumstances where the local authority has no statutory duty to support and monitor the placement.

Where Children's Social Care are involved with the child or family it is important to be clear about who is responsible for the decision about the care of the child and the role of the local authority. There may be some circumstances where the local authority become involved in making practical arrangements at the request of the parent but this does not necessarily mean that the local authority has any more responsibility than acting as a facilitator to enable to parent's decision to be carried out. The circumstances where the local authority becomes responsible are set out below.

## **Family Group Conference**

Involving parents, family and others significant to the child is essential in making plans and decisions about children's care. One way in which the local authority may facilitate the family to make suitable arrangements for the care of children is through a Family Group Conference.

Family Group Conferences are meetings facilitated by an independent person (a FGC Co-ordinator) whose role is to help family members come together to devise a suitable plan to care for the child from within the family.

see [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/family-group-conferencing-policy/pdf](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/family-group-conferencing-policy/pdf)

Family Group Conferences should always be offered to the family before a decision is made about an arrangement involving a Family and Friends carer.

Consideration must always be given to holding a Family Group Conference:

- When it proposed that a child be accommodated by the local authority
- When a decision is made to start care proceedings

see [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/family-group-conferencing-policy/pdf](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/family-group-conferencing-policy/pdf)

## Children in need

*A Child in Need is defined in Section 17(10) of the Children Act 1989 as a child who is disabled or who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services by the local authority.*

The child's social worker, from the duty or childcare team, is responsible for completing an assessment of the child's needs, taking into account the views and wishes of the child, the parent and any other significant adult in the child's life. . Following this assessment, if services are required a Child in Need plan will be drawn up and a package of support will be identified.

Support could be given through advice; involvement of other support services; practical assistance and the child through the provision of a one off payment, or in some circumstances ongoing financial support for a time. Carers will be expected to apply for all relevant benefits available to them for the care of the child and parents to contribute where appropriate.

### 5.1 Private Fostering

Private Fostering is an arrangement made between the person who holds Parental Responsibility for a child and someone who agrees to care for the child.

If this arrangement is to last for longer than 28 days, (in one continuous period) the private foster carer, or the person with legal parental responsibility for the child, has a duty to inform the Local Authority of the arrangements for the child.

Financial arrangements for the care of the child are made between the person with parental responsibility for the child and the carers. However, the child and his/her carers have the same right as any other family in the community to be assessed for help, including financial help, under Section 17 (Children Act 1989).

Once informed of the private fostering arrangements for the child, the Local Authority has a duty to satisfy itself that the welfare of the child is being satisfactorily safeguarded and

promoted. A social worker from the relevant childcare team will be allocated to visit the child and maintain regular contact with the child, the carer and the parent.

A social worker from the family placement team will undertake an assessment of the private foster carer and household, including statutory checks. This assessment is presented to the Joint Foster Care Panel for comment. The Head of Service for Looked After Children confirms the suitability of the arrangement to meet the need of the child or if there are significant concerns will decide on further action to be taken to secure the welfare of the child.

See also Bracknell Forest Private Fostering: Policy, Procedures & Practice Guidance at <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/private-fostering-policy.pdf>. This policy sets out the duties of private foster carers and the Children's Services under the Private Fostering Regulations (2005).

## **5.2 Family and Friends care (connected persons) and Looked After children**

Where a child becomes looked after the authority is responsible wherever possible to make arrangements for the child to live with a member of the family network who is approved as a foster carer (section 22 Children Act 1989).

A 'connected person' means an individual who is a relative, friend or other person connected with the child. A person in this last category may be someone who knows the child in a more professional capacity such as a childminder, a teacher or a youth worker although these are not exclusive categories. Such people would not all fit the term 'relative or friend' but nevertheless may be the best people with whom to place a child because of this pre-existing connection. Bracknell Forest refers to these carers as formal Family and Friends carers.

The process for assessment and approval for family and friends who apply to be foster carers for a specific Looked After child is the same as for any other foster carers except that the timescales for assessment are different where a child is already in the placement - see next section

It is important for any prospective family and friends carer to understand the implications of becoming an approved foster carer. The process is lengthy and comprehensive enquiries are made of the carer's background, motivation and ability to meet this child's needs, along with checks with the police, other agencies and a medical report.

The prospective carer also needs to be informed about the level of support that they would be provided for them were they to be approved as foster carers, including monthly visits from a supervising social worker, training and financial allowances.

Wherever possible therefore at an early stage in the planning process it would be helpful for a member of the family placement team to make a joint visit with the child's social worker to provide information and answer any queries.

The Family Right Group assessment format is used to assess family and friends carers. This form encourages the prospective carer to contribute their own views to the assessment and is a useful means of ensuring that consideration is given to the complex issues that can arise in these arrangements.

The child's social worker is responsible for the completion of Part 1 of the Family Rights Group form and the family placement worker for completion of Part 2.

The completed assessment is presented to the Joint Foster Panel for consideration. Both the child's social worker and the family placement worker should attend this Panel. The prospective carer is encouraged to attend the Panel meeting but this is not a requirement. The Joint Foster Panel recommendation is considered by the Agency Decision Maker, who is the Chief Officer, Children's Social Care and who makes the final decision.

### **5.3 Immediate placement of a child with a family or friends carer**

If there is a clearly assessed need for the placement of a child with a relative or 'connected person' in an emergency and the requirements of the 2011 Fostering Regulations cannot be fulfilled before placement, the 2010 Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations (Regulations 24 and 25) set out the arrangements for the temporary approval of a connected person.

Subject to the successful completion of a part 1 Family Right Group assessment, they may be immediately approved as a local authority foster carer for a period not exceeding 16 weeks. (This time period has been set to allow sufficient time for a foster carer approval

process to be undertaken, including any criminal records checks required.). See Appendix 4

However this placement must be approved by the nominated officer prior to placement of the child. In Bracknell Forest the nominated officer is Head of Service, Looked After Children or in their absence another Head of Service within Children's Social Care. The child's wishes and feelings about the proposed placement and the parents must form part of the assessment and inform the decision making process.

The initial assessment must include assessment of the suitability of the connected person, taking into account, the matters listed within schedule 4 of the 2010 Regulations, including the suitability of the proposed accommodation, and all other persons aged 18 and over who are members of the household in which it is proposed that the child will live, taking into account the requirements of the care planning procedure.

See Annexe 3 for a copy of Part 1 of Family Rights Group assessment form

Where a child becomes Looked After and is placed with family or friends carers the child's social worker must visit at a minimum of weekly until the first statutory review then a minimum of four weekly until full approval through the Foster Panel.

On each visit the child should be seen and spoken with alone having regard to their age and understanding

## **5.4 Placements extending beyond 16 weeks**

There will be some circumstances which require a further extension of time and fall under the 2010 regulations. These circumstances are:

- Where the approval process has taken longer than anticipated ( and in these circumstances the temporary approval may be extended for a further 8 weeks);
- or
- Where the Family and Friends carer has not been approved following the assessment process and seeks a review of the decision through the Independent Reviewing Mechanism (and in those circumstances the temporary approval will continue until the outcome of the review is known).

*For the full assessment and approval process see Appendix 3*

## **6 Long Term Legal Options**

### **6.1 Special guardianship orders**

In circumstances where a Family and Friends Carer is caring for a child on a long-term, or permanent basis, the optimum way of offering that child security could be for his/her carers to apply for a Residence or Special Guardianship Order, so that the day-to-day parental responsibilities that the carers take on for the child would be legally protected and defined by the legal order.

Special Guardianship offers a further option for children needing permanent care outside their birth family. It can offer greater security without absolute legal severance from the birth parents as in adoption

Relatives may apply for a Special Guardianship Order after caring for the child for one year. As Special Guardians, they will have parental responsibility for the child which, while it is still shared with the parents, can be exercised with greater autonomy on day-to-day matters than where there is a Residence Order.

Special Guardianship Orders may be made in private family proceedings and the local authority may not be a party to any such arrangements. However, a Special Guardianship Order in favour of a relative or foster carer (who was a Family and Friends' carer ) with whom a child is living may be an appropriate outcome as part of a permanence plan for a Child in Need or a Looked After child.

Where the child was Looked After immediately prior to the making of the Special Guardianship Order, the local authority has a responsibility to assess the support needs of the child, parents and Special Guardians, including the need for financial support.

In circumstances where a child is Looked After and is placed with Family and Friends Foster Carers the plan for the child to achieve permanence through his/her carers applying

for a Residence Order or Special Guardianship Order will be considered through the care planning and reviewing procedures. .

Eligibility for the payment of regular allowances to Special Guardians is determined by using the same financial assessment procedure and payment scale as applies for residence order allowances. The procedures set out for the review and management of allowances in the Bracknell Forest Adoption Support Policy, June 2006, also apply to Special Guardianship Allowances. See <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/special-guardianship-policy-and-procedure.pdf> and <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/adoption-support-policy-and-procedure.pdf> for further information.

## 6.2 Adoption

Adoption is the process by which all parental rights and responsibilities for a child are permanently transferred to an adoptive parent by a court. As a result the child legally becomes part of the adoptive family.

In some circumstances the child's need for security through permanence may best be met through adoption by the Family or Friends' carer with whom they have been living. This option will be considered through the child's care planning reviews.

Post adoption support is available for adoptive families and children throughout childhood.

See [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/adoption/pdf](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/adoption/pdf)

## 6.3 Supporting Contact with Parents

Where a child is a 'child in need' the authority is under a duty to promote contact between the child and his/her family *where it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard and promote his or her welfare*. As part of the support arrangements, it may be identified that specific assistance is required to ensure that any such contact can be managed safely. Information is available about local contact centres and family mediation services, and how to make use of their services.

[http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/contact\\_policy](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/contact_policy)

Where a child is looked after by Bracknell Forest Council the care plan will set out the contact arrangements between the child and their parents, siblings and other significant people and how this will be promoted and supported.

## **6.4 Complaints and Representations**

Family and Friends carers who wish to complain or make representations may do so in the usual way in accordance with the Bracknell Forest complaints procedure.

## Appendix 1

### Definition of a relative

The Children Act definition of a relative applies, as follows:

A relative is someone who is a:

- Grandparent
- Brother or Sister
- Uncle or Aunt

whether by full blood or half blood or by affinity (marriage) or a step parent.

A step-parent is someone who is or has been a party to a marriage in relation to whom the child is a child of the family.

Children Act (Section 10(5)a)

## Appendix 2

### Procedures to approve Family and Friends Carers

#### General

The approval of relatives and friends as foster carers assumes that::

The child's needs have been assessed and authorisation given by Head of Service for the child to become Looked After.

A care plan has been completed setting out the needs of the child and how they will be met

The parent(s) have completed and signed the relevant LAC<sup>1</sup> forms in respect of children who are to be accommodated

see [www,Bracknell-forest.gov.uk/ actions-when-a-child-becomes-looked-after.pdf](http://www.Bracknell-forest.gov.uk/actions-when-a-child-becomes-looked-after.pdf)

#### Actions required prior to placement

- (a) The Family Placement Social Worker or the Social Worker for the child<sup>2</sup> visits the potential carer's home prior to the placement and makes enquiries to:
- i) Ascertain the child's relationship to the carer, including details of previous contacts.
  - ii) Ascertain the nature of care and commitment that the carer is offering
  - iii) Identify any potential difficulties
  - iv) Evaluate the suitability of the accommodation.
  - v) Arrange for the applicant(s) to complete a application form for foster carers
  - vi) Obtain written consent to local Police checks, DOH checks, CRB checks and medical references in respect of all person over age 16 within the household
  - vii) Consider the suitability of the carers taking into account, the matters listed within Schedule 4 of 2010 Care planning Regulations
- b) Check with the police to ascertain whether anything is known which suggests that the prospective carer(s) may not be suitable to be entrusted with the child

---

<sup>1</sup> Looked After Children

<sup>2</sup> Allocation of these tasks will depend on the particular circumstances of the case and how the placement was identified.

- c) Check Framework i. to consider the possible implication of any prior involvement.
- d) Arrange for the child to have a health assessment. (If this cannot be achieved prior to placement, it should take place at the earliest opportunity).
- e) Obtain approval from Head of Service Looked After Children for the placement to proceed.
- f) Arrange a placement agreement meeting between the parent(s), young person (where relevant) and the carer(s) to complete the Placement Information Record and clarify other details of the day-to-day arrangements and arrangements for introductions.

## **Action required immediately following the child's placement**

- a) Notify other relevant BFC departments or other agency professionals of the child's placement. This must include written notification of the relevant health and education services. (Standard letter available)
- b) Record the details of the child's admission to local authority care on the electronic case record.
- c) Notify the Independent Reviewing Officer of the child's placement.
- d) Visit the placement and see the child weekly for the four-week period of immediate placement under Regulation 24, up to the child's first statutory review.
- e) Notify the family placement team manager that the placement has been made under Regulation 24 of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010 and forward a copy of the completed and signed foster carer application form.

### **Upon receipt of this notification, the Family Placement Team Manager will:**

- f) Arrange for the carer to receive weekly payments of fostering allowance.

g) Allocate a family placement social worker to undertake the following:

- Provide supervising support to the placement
- Begin full assessment of suitability under Regulation 24, of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010 using the BAAF Family and Friends assessment forms, including statutory CRB and agency checks, medical references and referee reports.

## **Action required if the child's placement is expected to be beyond sixteen weeks**

(a) Child's social worker fully completes the relevant Family and Friends assessment forms in respect of the carers and the child.

(b) Child's social worker and family placement social worker submit the following documents to the fostering panel within the sixteen week period:

- Completed Family and Friends assessment forms, including:
  - Reason for the child's proposed placement,
  - Full personal details and history of the child and proposed carers,
  - Full assessment of the carer(s) parenting experience and capacity and their ability to meet the specific child's needs in the short/medium and long term,
  - Particulars of all household members,
  - Details of the accommodation,
  - Racial, religious and other cultural matters,
  - The outcome of any previous assessment to care for a child as a foster carer, adopter or registered childminder or provider of day care, and details of any previous approval or refusal of such an application relating to him or any other member of his household,
  - Alternatives to placement with applicants, including details of searches/enquiries
  - Parents views on the proposed placement,
  - Child/Young person's views on the proposed placement,
  - Anticipated need for post placement support,
  - Conclusion and Recommendations.
- Copies of medical reports from the agency medical adviser,
- Details of enhanced Criminal Records Bureau criminal conviction checks for carers and other adult household members or persons with whom the child will have regular contact (advice should be taken from the Team Manager regarding this),

- Details of all police, DOH and agency checks, including school reports and all other relevant information from agencies and schools/employers who know the family and/or child,
  - Record of interviews with referees.
- (a) Child's social worker and family placement worker present the above reports to the fostering panel for approval. The carers will also be offered the opportunity to attend the fostering panel.
- (c) Fostering panel recommends approval of the applicant(s) under Regulation 26 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2011 or otherwise and the agency decision maker then determines the outcome of the assessment.

## Accountability

- Accountability for the decision to look after a child rests with the Head of Service
- Responsibility for authorising and approving the child's placements for a maximum of sixteen weeks rests with the Head of Service for Looked After Children.
- As with any other placement the responsible authority must be satisfied that the placement is the most suitable means to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. Whenever a child is placed before the full approval of the carer as a local authority foster carer, there is a possibility that the connected person may not be approved at the end of the assessment process. The risk of a child being moved from a placement in which s/he has become settled must be minimised by careful consideration of the appropriateness of a placement at the point of initial viability assessment.
- The period of temporary approval may be extended for a further eight weeks where the approval process has taken longer than anticipated but this provision is to be used only exceptionally and where there are clearly identified reasons why the full assessment process cannot be undertaken, such as unavoidable delays in obtaining statutory checks.
- Accountability for the ensuring that reports are submitted to the fostering panel within sixteen weeks of placements is held jointly between the fieldwork team and family placement team managers. Fieldwork team managers should ensure that their staff complete reports on the child within this timescale. The family placement team manager is responsible for ensuring that the assessment of the carer(s) is completed in advance of this 16 week limit.
- Accountability for ensuring that the correct reports and paperwork are submitted to the Joint Foster Panel lies with the Family Placement Team Manager. The Panel application must be quality checked and signed by the Head of Service (Looked After Children).

- The decision to approve the foster carers ultimately rests with Children’s Social Care rather than the fostering panel. On receipt of panel minutes, the Agency Decision Maker will make a decision about whether or not the carer’s are approved taking into account panel recommendations.
- Accountability for the ongoing supervision of the child’s placement rests with fieldwork team staff and management. Accountability for support, review and ongoing approval of the foster carers resides with family placement service managers in the usual way.

## Support to Carers

- All Family and Friends foster carers will be provided with the same level of support as other departmental foster carers. The family placement service will provide a Supervising Social Worker as soon as it becomes apparent that the placement may need to extend beyond the 16 weeks allowed under Regulation 25. The Supervising Social Worker will work to provide the same level of support as is extended to other foster carers. The Family and Friends carer will also have access to any out of hours support services that are available to other foster carers.
- Arrangements should be made for Family and Friends foster carers to have access to the full range of training opportunities afforded to other approved foster carers.
- Family and Friends foster carers will receive a level of allowance in line with the approved BFC rates. Family and Friends foster carers will be assessed for financial assistance in respect of start up costs from the family placement budget as appropriate.
- Family and Friends foster carers will be provided with Fostering Network membership and a BFBC leisure card following full approval

## Payment of Fostering Allowances to Regulation 24 foster carers

The child’s social worker should notify the Family Placement Team Manager at the earliest opportunity that a suitable placement has been made which meets the initial requirements under Regulation 24 of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations.

The Family Placement Team Manager will initially authorise payment of fostering allowances (as detailed above) for a maximum period of 16 weeks (from the date of commencement of the placement) on receipt of the application to foster form.

The Family Placement Team Manager may authorise continued payment of fostering allowances in the normal way on receipt of confirmation that the carer's application has been considered by the fostering panel and agreed by the agency decision maker.

Payments of fostering allowance may be suspended or terminated by the Family Placement Team Manager in the event that:

- The foster carer does not cooperate fully with the assessment process,
- On receipt of information that indicates that the carer could not lawfully be approved as a foster carer.
- Following a formal departmental decision not to approve the applicants as foster carers.
- Following termination of the child's placement with the carer

Foster carers should be advised of their right to appeal against any decision to suspend or terminate their allowance. This appeal should be made to the Head of Service (Looked After Children) in the first instance.

[www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/allowance-scheme-for-substitute-family-carers.pdf](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/allowance-scheme-for-substitute-family-carers.pdf)

## Overlap with legal proceedings

On some occasions, children may be placed with Family and Friends carers during the course of legal proceedings. In these circumstances, it may be necessary to speed up assessment and approval processes to bring them into line with court time-scales and deadlines. This may be particularly the case if the court is required to consider the possibility of the child living with the carer on a permanent basis. However, in all circumstances a full assessment must still be completed.

In these circumstances, consideration should also be given to whether the child's needs may be better met by their placement under a residence or special guardianship order rather than continued placement under fostering regulations.

See departmental policy on permanency planning, special guardian and residence orders at:

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/permanency-planning-for-looked-after-children.pdf>

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/special-guardianship-policy-and-procedure.pdf>

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/residence-order-policy-and-procedure.pdf>

## Notifications to carers

Staff involved should ensure that the applicants are kept fully informed of the progress of their applications. After panel has considered their application in accordance with general fostering procedures it will rest with the Agency Decision Maker who has confirmed (or otherwise) the panel recommendation. This will be formally notified to the carer/s verbally within two days and in writing of their recommendations within five days.

## Review of placements

Placements made under these regulations should be reviewed at intervals set out in Children's Social Care's policy and procedures for the statutory review of Looked After children.

The foster carer's terms of approval will be subject to annual review by the family placement team, or more frequently in the event of difficulty, complaint or allegations.

See:

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/statutory-review-of-children-looked-after-policy-and-procedure.pdf>

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/policy-and-protocol-for-the-consultation-of-lac-and-their-families.pdf>

## Appendix 4

### Family Rights Group: Temporary Approval of a Connected Person as a Foster Carer –Part 1

#### Introduction

#### Placing a child or children with a connected person

Within the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010 (the 2010 Regulations), which provide much of the regulatory framework for these assessments, people who are potentially family and friends carers are referred to as 'connected persons', and that is the term which is generally used within this assessment form. *The Children Act Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services* defines a connected person as "a relative (defined as section 105 of the 1989 Act as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt (whether of the full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step parent), friend

of or other person connected with the looked after child.” In selecting a placement for a looked after child, the responsible local authority must give preference to a placement with a connected person who is an approved foster carer. If the connected person is not already approved as a foster carer, that person can be given temporary approval for a period of up to 16 weeks, during which they must be assessed as foster carers if the child’s placement with them is to continue. In exceptional circumstances this period can be extended by a further eight weeks, if the approval process is taking longer than anticipated, or until the outcome of the review if the connected person seeks a review of a decision not to approve them, using the Independent Reviewing Mechanism (IRM).

Part 1 of the Family Rights Group assessment form is designed to provide the information that is required in order for the connected person to be given temporary approval while the fostering assessment is carried out. Because these assessments will probably have to be carried out and presented for approval very quickly, the form has been laid out so that the assessor will have the choice of handwriting or typing the report into the expandable boxes.

The 2010 Regulations specify the information that ought to be taken into account in deciding whether a connected person should be given temporary fostering approval. The Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Family and Friends Care states that the local authority must ascertain as much of this information as is possible in the circumstances. Where a child is placed with a connected person who is to be temporarily approved, every effort has to be made to maximise the level and quality of information that will be used to decide whether the connected person should be temporarily approved. In particular, the information should focus on:

- an assessment of the quality of the existing relationship between the child and the connected person;
- the child’s wishes and feelings about the placement;
- a visit to the connected person’s home by the social worker, which should confirm that the physical environment and space available is suitable for the particular child;
- whether the connected person would require any additional resources in order to meet the particular needs of the child;
- the quality of the relationships between the members of the household, including children and young people, and their views about the proposed caring arrangement;
- impact of the proposed caring arrangement on other children and young people in the household, based on information about their history and current lifestyle.

## **How to use the Part 1 of the Family Rights Group form**

The form consists of three sections:

- **Section A** provides basic factual information about the household and the child or children being placed.
- **Section B** consists of questions posed to the connected person, in order to provide information about the capacity of this particular household to meet the needs of this particular child, and what support might be needed in order for this to happen.
- **Section C** provides information from the assessing social worker, including an analysis of whether this child’s needs can be met within this household, and whether the connected person should be temporarily approved as a foster carer for the child or children. The connected person can comment on the social worker’s conclusion and recommendation.

It is intended that the connected persons and the assessing social worker should work collaboratively to complete the form. Although Sections A and B present information mainly from the connected person, the

social worker has final responsibility for the content of these parts of the form. The social worker should discuss with the carers how they would be most comfortable providing information requested of them, in the time that is available to complete the form: this could be by the connected person writing their own answers to the questions, or it could be by talking to the social worker with the social worker doing most of the writing. However, the social worker must ensure that enough information is provided, particularly with regard to the areas of information identified above, to ensure that the local authority is able to make an informed decision about whether the carers should be given temporary approval as the child's foster carers for a period of 16 weeks.

### Viability Study

Although designed to conform to the requirements for assessing a connected person at the time of a placement under regulation 24 of the 2010 Regulations, Part 1 of this form can also be used when a child is not yet placed, to assess whether a potential placement with a connected person would be a viable option. If the assessment shows that such a placement could be viable, then the local authority would have all the information needed in order to approve the connected person as a temporary foster carer, and make a placement under regulation 24.

Viability studies might be undertaken, for example, during court proceedings, where more than one family member has put themselves forward as potential carers for a child, and this has not been resolved in a Family Group Conference, in order to assess the comparative strengths and risks of each; or to carry out an initial assessment, where the local authority has reasonable doubts about whether a connected person could meet the required standards of the Fostering Services Regulations 2011 and the Fostering Services National Minimum Standards 2011.

**It should be noted that a viability study carried out using Part 1 of the form will only provide enough information for approval as a temporary foster carer for 16 weeks under regulation 24 of the 2010 Regulations, and will not provide enough information for full approval as a foster carer under regulation 27 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2011. Such approval would require an assessment using Part 2 of the form to be completed and presented to the fostering panel within 16 weeks of the child being placed**

## Section A: Basic information

### A.1 Details of the household

Please provide details of all members of the carer/s' household, including children, lodgers, carers' parents, etc.

Name	Gender	Date of birth	Position in Household	Ethnicity	Relationship to child being placed


Address, contact telephone numbers and carer's email address of household where child/ren are being placed:

**A.2 Details of the child/ren being placed**

Name	Gender	Date of birth	Ethnicity

**A.3 Are there any regular visitors to the household who would provide any care for the child, or be in regular contact with the child?**

If so, please supply their name, address and telephone number:

**A.4 Accommodation**

(i) Please describe the accommodation, including the sleeping arrangements as they will be when the child is placed. What physical space is available for the child?

(ii) Describe the neighbourhood you live in, and what resources there are locally which could support you and the child/ren

**A.5 Criminal convictions and cautions (these should be listed on a separate sheet of paper)**

In responding to this question, you should be aware that:

1. As foster carers, you are exempt from the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, and no convictions or cautions will be considered 'spent' on account of time having passed.
2. You will be subject to a check with the Criminal Records Bureau, which will provide details of any convictions or cautions, regardless of when they took place.

- Do any members of the household have any criminal convictions?
- Does anybody else who would be involved in caring for the child?
- Please say who provided this information about convictions.
- What information has the social worker obtained from checks with the local police force?
- Have CRB forms been completed? If not, when will this happen?

**Section B: Meeting the child's needs**  
**ABOUT THE CHILD**

**B1. Child's relationship with connected person**

How long have you known the child, and in what capacity? How well would you say you know them? Is the child used to visiting your home? Include when you last saw the child.

**B2. Please outline any harm that the child is said to be at risk of suffering, or any danger to the child.**

Even where you feel that a risk has not been proven, you should describe why it might be thought the child is at risk. Who is thought to pose a risk to the child? What steps will you take to ensure that the child will not be harmed or placed at risk of harm while staying with you? What support do you think you will need in order to manage this?

**B3. The child’s physical needs, including medical and dental care.**

As a temporary foster carer, you will be responsible for ensuring that the child’s basic physical needs are met, i.e. to be fed, clothed, sheltered and taken for medical and dental treatment when appropriate. Are

you aware of any specific issues that could arise with regard to this particular child in ensuring these needs are met? How will you manage any such issues if they arise? What support do you think you might need?

**B4. Education, learning and development**

What steps will you take to ensure that the child's education is promoted, and that they have the opportunity to learn and develop while they are staying with you? What support do you think you might need?

**B5. The child's views**

How do you think the child feels about coming to live with you? Have you had the opportunity to discuss this with them yet?

**B6. Contact**

**Has there been any discussion with you about plans for the child to have contact with their parents, other people with parental responsibility, siblings, or anybody else?**

What is your view about these plans? In your view, who should the child be having contact with, how often should this happen, and where should the contact take place? Would you need any additional support to enable contact to take place in such a way as to be most beneficial for the child, e.g. an independent supervisor, contact centre, etc?

**ABOUT YOU (THE CONNECTED PERSON) AND YOUR HOUSEHOLD**

**B7. Your household's composition and relationships**

Please describe the nature of the relationships between all members of the household, as listed in A1. You should include in your description:

- the nature of the relationship each person has with the connected person
- the nature of the relationships with each other
- any sexual relationships
- any relationship with any person who is a parent of the child being placed
- any relationship to the child being placed
- any current or previous domestic violence between household members, including the connected person

**B8. Your family history**

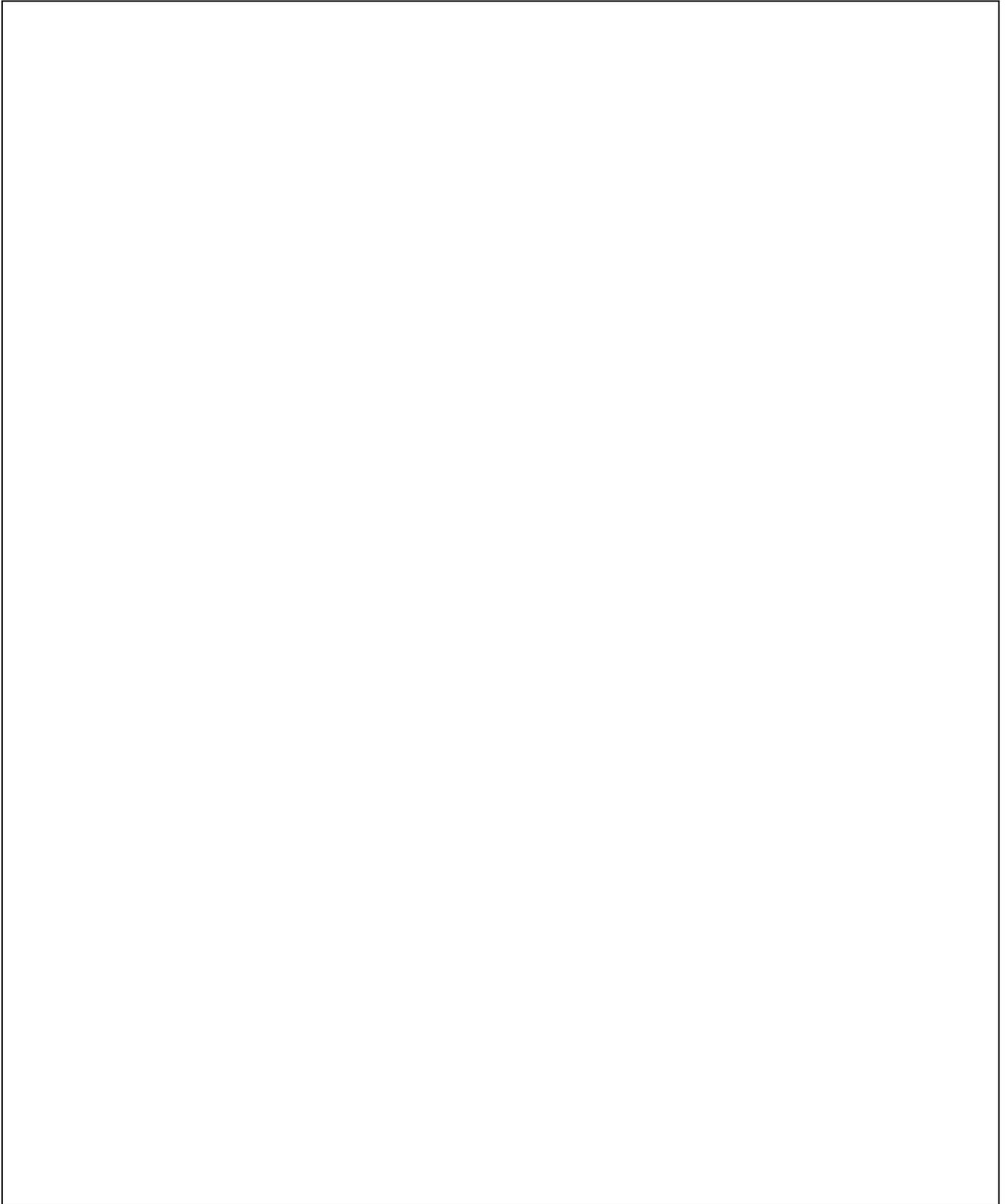
You should include in this:

- particulars of your childhood and upbringing, including the strengths and difficulties of your parents or others who cared for and raised you;
- your relationship with your parents and siblings, and their relationship with each other;
- your educational achievements, and any specific learning difficulty or disability;
- a chronology of the significant events in your life;
- details about other relatives, and their relationships with you and with the child being placed;
- your past and present employment and other sources of income;

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the respondent to provide their answer to the question below.

**B9. Your health**

Please describe your current state of health, including physical, emotional and mental health. Is there any significant information in your medical history? Please include any current or past issues of substance misuse or mental health problems.



## Section C: Social worker's information

### C1. Contact details of professionals supporting the placement

Name of local authority placing child:

	Assessing social worker	Assessing social worker's manager	Child(ren)'s social worker (if different)	Child(ren)'s social worker's manager
Name				
Address				
Telephone				
Work mobile				
email				

### C2. Social worker's report on the wishes and feelings of the child

What are the wishes and feelings of the child about being placed with the connected person, and how have these views been ascertained? How recently has the child visited the connected person's home? (Depending on their age and understanding, and time available, children/young people may be invited to express their views, by means such as writing, drawing or making a tape, and these can be taken into account in making a decision about temporary fostering approval.)

**C3. Views of the parents and others with parental responsibility**

What are the views of the parents and others with parental responsibility about the child being placed with the connected person? The parents should be invited, time permitting, to put their views in writing. Where the parents are opposed to the placement, why is this? What additional support might the carers need, where the parents are opposed to the placement, e.g. with managing contact?

**C4. Comment and analysis by social worker**

The social worker should explain the benefits and risks of placing the child with this connected person under a temporary fostering approval. Comments and analysis by the social worker should cover all areas relevant to the welfare of this particular child being placed with this particular connected person, but should in any case include:

- (a) the quality of the existing relationship between the child and the connected person
- (b) history and current lifestyle of other young people in the household
- (c) the home environment of the connected person and the space available there for the child
- (d) the nature of the relationships between the members of the connected person's household, including other children and young people, and their views about the child coming to live with them

- (e) likely impact on other children and young people in the household of the child coming to live with them
- (f) plans for contact
- (g) any support that would be needed to ensure the placement of the child could be maintained and their needs appropriately met

**C5. Conclusion and recommendation**

- (i) The social worker should explain why they are recommending that the connected person should or should not be given temporary approval as a family and friends foster carer.

- (ii) The connected person should comment below on whether they agree with the social worker's conclusion and recommendation, and where their views differ from the social worker explain what their disagreements are.

**C6. Date temporary approval will lapse**

This should be 16 weeks from the date the child was placed with the connected person

**C7. Signatures**

1<sup>st</sup> connected person ..... Date .....

2<sup>nd</sup> connected person ..... Date .....

Social worker ..... Date .....

Social work manager ..... Date .....

**C8. Signature of the officer nominated with the authority to grant temporary fostering approval to the connected person**

I do / do not (delete as appropriate) agree to the approval of the connected person who is the subject of this report to be a temporary foster carer, for a period of up to 16 weeks:

Name (print) .....

Position held .....

Signature ..... Date .....

Comments:

**C9. Agreement to extend temporary fostering approval**

In exceptional circumstances, the local authority can extend the temporary approval of a connected person. The approval can be extended for a further eight weeks, if it has not been possible to complete the full assessment process within 16 weeks, or until the outcome of the review is known, if having been assessed and turned down at the fostering panel the connected person applies to the Independent Review Mechanism.

In agreeing to extend the temporary fostering approval, the nominated officer confirms that the placement with the connected person remains the most appropriate available for the child, the Independent Reviewing Officer has been informed, and the views of the fostering panel sought:

Signature ..... Date .....

Reasons for agreeing to extend temporary approval, including any views expressed by the fostering panel (minutes of the panel discussion may be attached):

This form is based on work originally developed by C Edwards and E Brocklesby in conjunction with FRG and Hampshire Social Services



## ANNEX A: CARING FOR SOMEBODY ELSE'S CHILD – OPTIONS

	Private Fostering	Family Care (Informal)	Family & 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 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. 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, anyone 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 <b>must</b> 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 & 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	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 by the LA, the placement is supervised and there are statutory reviews. Once the adoption order is made, none.
Review of	It is not a placement, but the LA may do formal reviews in addition to ongoing assessment during visits.	None	Statutory reviews if 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 for 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.

	Private Fostering	Family Care (Informal)	Family & Friends Foster Care	Unrelated Foster Care	Residence Order	Special Guardianship Order (SGO)	Adoption
Financial Support - Entitlement	<p>Can claim child benefit and child tax credit if not being paid to parent.</p> <p>Financial responsibility to maintain the child remains with holders of PR</p>	<p>Can claim child benefit and child tax credit if not being paid to parent.</p> <p>Financial responsibility to maintain the child remains with holders of PR</p> <p>Guardians Allowance payable if both parents have died, or the only surviving parent cannot be found or serving 2 years or more prison sentence.</p>	<p>Child benefit and child tax credit not payable.</p> <p>Weekly allowance to meet the costs of caring for the child. This should meet at least the national minimum rate set by DCSF.</p> <p>The Manchester City Council judgement ruled that allowances must be the same for all foster carers, whether or not family &amp; friends.</p>		<p>Can claim child benefit and child tax credit if not being paid to parent.</p>	<p>Can claim child benefit and child tax credit if not being paid to parent.</p>	<p>Can claim child benefit and child tax credit if not being paid to parent.</p> <p>Entitlement to assessment for financial support (part of adoption support) if child looked after prior to order.</p>
Financial Support - Discretionary	<p>LA has discretion to make one-off or regular payments under section 17 Children Act.</p>	<p>LA has discretion to make one-off or regular payments under section 17 Children Act.</p>	<p>Some fostering providers pay their foster carers a fee to recognise the carers' skill, experience and commitment.</p> <p>The Manchester City Council judgement (which requires allowances to be paid on the same basis regardless of the relationship of the carer to the child) did not consider fees. However, Statutory Guidance for Fostering Services requires that any policy in relation to the payment of fees must be applied to all foster carers who meet the criteria in the same way and must not discriminate on the grounds of a pre-existing relationship with the child.</p>		<p>LA has discretion to pay residence order allowance – usually if child was previously fostered by the carers, or exceptionally if making residence order prevents child becoming looked after.</p> <p>Any allowance reviewed annually.</p>	<p>Entitled to an assessment for financial support under the Special Guardianship Regulations 2005 if child looked after prior to order and meets the criteria in the regulations.</p> <p>Subject to assessment as above and for former foster carers can include an element of remuneration.</p> <p>Regular or one off payments.</p> <p>Any allowances reviewed annually.</p>	<p>Subject to assessment, one off payments or regular adoption allowances may be paid.</p>

## **ANNEX D: USEFUL ORGANISATIONS AND INFORMATION FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS CARERS**

### **Action for Prisoners' Families**

Works to reduce the negative impact of imprisonment on prisoners' families. Produces publications and resources, and provides advice, information and training as well as networking opportunities.

[www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk](http://www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk)

Address: Unit 21, Carlson Court

116 Putney Bridge Road

London, SW15 2NQ

Tel: 020 8812 3600

E-mail: [info@actionpf.org.uk](mailto:info@actionpf.org.uk)

Advice line: 0808 808 2003

[info@prisonersfamilieshelpline.org.uk](mailto:info@prisonersfamilieshelpline.org.uk)

### **Addiction**

Offers a range of support developed for families and carers affected by substance misuse.

[www.addaction.org.uk](http://www.addaction.org.uk)

Address: 67-69 Cowcross Street

London EC1M 6PU

Tel. 020 7251 5860

Email: [info@addaction.org.uk](mailto:info@addaction.org.uk)

### **Adfam**

Works with families affected by drugs and alcohol, and supports carers of children whose parents have drug and alcohol problems.

[www.adfam.org.uk](http://www.adfam.org.uk)

## Family and Friends Policy and Procedure

Address: 25 Corsham Street,

London N1 6DR

Tel: 020 7553 7640

Email: [admin@adfam.org.uk](mailto:admin@adfam.org.uk)

## **Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)**

Offers free independent advice and information for parents and carers on a range of state education and schooling issues, including admissions, exclusion, attendance, special educational needs and bullying.

[www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)

Address: 1c Aberdeen Studios,

22 Highbury Grove,

London N5 2DQ

General advice line: 0808 800 5793

Exclusion advice line: 0808 800 0327

Exclusion information line: 020 7704 9822 (24hr answer phone)

## **BeGrand.net**

Website offering information and advice to grandparents, plus online and telephone advice.

[www.begrand.net](http://www.begrand.net)

Helpline: 0845 434 6835

## **British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF)**

Provides information and advice about adoption and fostering and publishes resources.

[www.baaf.org.uk](http://www.baaf.org.uk)

Address: Saffron House,

6-10 Kirby Street,

London EC1N 8TS

Family and Friends Policy and Procedure

Tel: 020 7421 2600

Email: [mail@baaf.org.uk](mailto:mail@baaf.org.uk)

## **Children's Legal Centre**

Provides free independent legal advice and factsheets to children, parents, carers and professionals.

[www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)

Address: University of Essex

Wivenhoe Park

Colchester

Essex CO4 3SQ

Tel: 01206 877 910

E-mail: [clc@essex.ac.uk](mailto:clc@essex.ac.uk)

Child Law Advice Line: 0808 802 0008

Community Legal Advice - Education: 0845 345 4345

## **Citizens Advice Bureaux**

Helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice through local bureaux and website.

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

## **Department for Education**

Lists details of telephone help lines and online services to provide information, advice and support on a range of issues that parents and families may face in bringing up children and young people.

[www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families](http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families)

## **Family Fund Trust**

Helps families with severely disabled or seriously ill children to have choices and the opportunity to enjoy ordinary life. Gives grants for things that make life easier and more enjoyable for the disabled child and their family.

## Family and Friends Policy and Procedure

Address: 4 Alpha Court

Monks Cross Drive

York YO32 9WN

[www.familyfund.org.uk](http://www.familyfund.org.uk)

Tel: 0845 130 4542

Email: [info@familyfund.org.uk](mailto:info@familyfund.org.uk)

## **Family Rights Group (FGR)**

Provides advice to parents and other family members whose children are involved with or require children's social care services because of welfare needs or concerns. Publishes resources, helps to develop support groups for family and friends carers, and runs a discussion board.

[www.frg.org.uk](http://www.frg.org.uk)

Address: Second Floor

The Print House

18 Ashwin Street

London E8 3DL

Tel: 020 7923 2628

Advice line: 0800 801 0366

Email: [advice@frg.org.uk](mailto:advice@frg.org.uk)

## **The Fostering Network**

Supports foster carers and anyone with an interest in fostering to improve the lives of children in care. Publishes resources and runs Fosterline, a confidential advice line for foster carers including concerns about a child's future, allegations and complaints, legislation and financial matters.

[www.fostering.net](http://www.fostering.net)

Address: 87 Blackfriars Road

London SE1 8HA

Email: [info@fostering.net](mailto:info@fostering.net)

Tel: 020 7620 6400

Fosterline: 0800 040 7675

Email: [fosterline@fostering.net](mailto:fosterline@fostering.net)

Family and Friends Policy and Procedure

## **The Grandparents' Association**

Supports grandparents and their families, especially those who have lost or are losing contact with their grandchildren because of divorce, separation or other family problems, those caring for their grandchildren on a full-time basis, and those with childcare responsibilities for their grandchildren.

[www.grandparents-association.org.uk](http://www.grandparents-association.org.uk)

Address: Moot House

The Stow

Harlow

Essex CM20 3AG

Tel: 01279 428040

Helpline: 0845 434 9585

Welfare benefits advice and information: 0844 357 1033

Email: [info@grandparents-association.org.uk](mailto:info@grandparents-association.org.uk)

## **Grandparents Plus**

Champions the role of grandparents and the wider family in children's lives, especially when they take on the caring role in difficult family circumstances.

Address: Grandparents Plus

18 Victoria Park Square

Bethnal Green

London E2 9PF

Tel: 020 8981 8001

Email: [info@grandparentsplus.org.uk](mailto:info@grandparentsplus.org.uk)

## **Mentor UK**

Promotes the health and wellbeing of children and young people to reduce the damage that drugs can do to lives.

[www.mentoruk.org.uk](http://www.mentoruk.org.uk)

Address: Fourth Floor

74 Great Eastern Street

Family and Friends Policy and Procedure

London EC2A 3JG

Tel: 020 7739 8494

Email: [admin@mentoruk.org](mailto:admin@mentoruk.org)

## **Family Mediation Helpline**

Provides information and advice about family mediation services and eligibility for public funding.

08456 026627

[www.familymediationhelpline.co.uk](http://www.familymediationhelpline.co.uk)

## **National Family Mediation (NFM)**

Provides mediation services to support couples who are separated, and their children and others affected by this.

[www.nfm.org.uk](http://www.nfm.org.uk)

4 Barnfield Hill, Exeter EX1 1SR.

0300 4000 636

[general@nfm.org.uk](mailto:general@nfm.org.uk)

## **Partners of Prisoners and Families Support Group**

Operates helpline and provides a variety of services to support anyone who has a link with someone in prison, prisoners and other agencies.

[www.partnersofprisoners.co.uk](http://www.partnersofprisoners.co.uk)

Address: Valentine House

1079 Rochdale Road

Blackley

Manchester M9 8AJ

Tel: 0161 702 1000

Offenders' Families Helpline Tel: 0808 808 2003

Email: [info@prisonersfamilieshelpline.co.uk](mailto:info@prisonersfamilieshelpline.co.uk)

Family and Friends Policy and Procedure

## **Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT)**

Provides practical and emotional support to prisoners and to their children and families. The Kinship Care Support Service provides support and advice to family members and friends who care for children whose parents are in HMP Holloway.

[www.prisonadvice.org.uk](http://www.prisonadvice.org.uk)

Address: Park Place

12 Lawn Lane

Vauxhall

London

SW8 1UD

Telephone: 020 77359535

## **Parents Against Drug Abuse (PADA)**

Delivers support and services to the families of substance users, including a national helpline.

[www.pada.org.uk](http://www.pada.org.uk)

Address: The Foundry

Marcus Street

Birkenhead CH41 1EU

Phone: 0151 649 1580

National Families Helpline: 08457 023867

## **Parentline Plus**

Provides help and support in all aspects of family life, including information, an online chat facility and a 24 hour helpline.

[www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)

Address: CAN Mezzanine

49-51 East Road

London N1 6AH

Tel: 020 7553 3080

24hr Advice line: 0808 800 2222

Email: [parentsupport@familylives.org.uk](mailto:parentsupport@familylives.org.uk)

## Family and Friends Policy and Procedure

### **TalktoFrank**

The government's national drugs helpline which offers free confidential drugs information and advice 24 hours a day. Information and advice is also available via the website.

[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

24 hour advice line: 0800 77 66 00

Text: 82111

Email: [frank@talktofrank.com](mailto:frank@talktofrank.com)

### **Voice**

Advocacy organisation for children living away from home or in need.

[www.voiceyp.org](http://www.voiceyp.org)

Address: 320 City Road

London EC1V 2NZ

Tel: 020 7833 5792

Young person's advice line: 0808 800 5792

Email: [info@voiceyp.org](mailto:info@voiceyp.org)

### **Young Minds**

Works to improve the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people and empowering their parents and carers.

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

Address: 48-50 St John Street

London EC1M 4DG

Tel: 020 7336 8445

Parents helpline: 0808 802 5544