

Friends and
Family Care
Policy and
Placement of
Children in
Care with
Connected
Persons
Procedure

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Friends and Family Care Policy and Placement of Children in Care with Connected Persons Procedure

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1. Policy

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.

Where birth parents cannot look after their children, most families will find a solution from within their family network. They may need temporary or short term help from Children's Social Care and this can be provided under section 17 of the 1989 Children Act - see Financial Assistance to Children in Need Procedure. Effective implementation of the Local Authority's duty under section 17 of the 1989 Children Act will ensure that wherever possible children's needs are met through the best use of resources designed to safeguard and promote their welfare. This will help ensure that children do not become children in care, unless to do so is the most appropriate way to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and promoted.

Some families will set up private fostering arrangements to solve their difficulties and these should be notified to the local authority under the private fostering regulations - see Private Fostering Procedure.

This document refers only to the procedure for placements with Connected Persons made for children who are in care.

A Connected Person is defined as "A relative, friend or other person connected with a child. The latter is someone who would not fit the term 'relative or friend', but who has a pre-existing relationship with the child. It could be someone who knows the child in a more professional capacity such as (for example) a child-minder, a teacher or a youth worker."

Relative is defined as "a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of the full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step-parent."

2. Legal Framework

A child in care can only be placed with an approved foster carer, but Regulation 24 of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010, allows a child to be placed with a Connected Person for up to 16 (sixteen) weeks or while the carer is being assessed as an approved foster carer.

3. Definition

A placement with a Connected Person can be defined as being an arrangement where:

- A child cannot live with their parents and is living away from the parental home with a relative or friend and
- the placement has in some way been assisted or initiated and/or is supported by Children's Social Care and
- the child would otherwise be with foster carers, in residential care, independent living or adopted.

4. Principles of Friends and Family Care

- Where a child cannot safely remain in the care of his parents, the local authority is required to intervene to protect the child but must also take any necessary steps to promote family life for the child.
- The Children Act 1989 states that when a child comes into the care system either by agreement with parents or under a court order, the local authority must aim to reunite the child with the family.
- A key principle of the Children Act 1989 is that children are best brought up within their families and, for the purposes of the Act, the term 'family' is to be understood broadly. The guidance underpinning the Act defines "family" widely and includes relatives, friends and other significant people in a child's life.
- 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.
- Section 23(1) to (6) of the Children Act 1989 places a duty on local authorities to ensure the placement of children with relatives or with people with whom they are familiar or connected, as an alternative to being in care with strangers, and states: "unless it is not practicable or consistent with the child's welfare, the child must be placed with family and friends, near home and with any siblings who are also in care with the local authority".
- The Children Act affirms that family life will vary according to culture, class, religion, and community and asserts the importance of ethnicity, culture and language being significant factors in shaping decisions affecting children.
- Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights, which is part of UK Law under the Human Rights Act 1998, requires public authorities to have respect for individuals and family life.

- Children, parents, family members and family friends should be involved in decision making and planning about child placements as collaboratively as possible.

5. Family Group Meetings

A Family Group Meeting is a collaborative decision-making forum that brings together informal (family, friends, community) and formal (professional, agency) networks to discuss the plan for a child and make decisions for the child's future.

Family Group Meetings should always be offered to the family before a decision is made about an arrangement involving a Connected Person. Consideration must always be given to holding a Family Group Meeting:

- When accommodation is requested or proposed
- When a decision is made to commence Care Proceedings

Family Group Meetings help family members to devise a suitable plan to care for the child from within their own resources. Effective placements with Connected Persons are more likely to emerge from Family Group Meetings as the parents and family are involved in the planning and decision-making for the placement.

6. Alternatives to Placements with Connected Persons

a. The use of Section 17 financial assistance for children who are not in care

Departmental policy is to promote the upbringing of Children in Need by their families, but to only provide financial assistance in exceptional circumstances.

Parents should be encouraged to contribute to their child's care and should transfer the Child Benefit Allowance to their child's carer.

The financial means of the carer must be taken into account and efforts made to ensure that they are receiving their welfare benefits entitlement.

Where section 17 financial support is provided, it will be subject to continuing review to ensure that the care arrangements are continuing to meet the needs of the child – see Financial Assistance to Children in Need Procedure.

b. Private Fostering

Any voluntary placement of a child under 16 with someone who is not a close relative for longer than 27 days will be subject to the Private Fostering Regulations 2005. For further details of the relevant procedure, see Private Fostering Procedure.

A close relative is defined as “a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of the full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step-parent.”

7. Placements of Children with Connected Persons

Where a child is placed in with a Connected Person for more than 16 weeks, the National Minimum Standards for Foster Care will apply and the Connected Person must be assessed as a foster carer for that child.

A child is deemed to be ‘a child in care’ when they have been:

- Accommodated (Section 20, Children Act 1989)
- Made the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order (Sections 31 and 38, Children Act 1989).
- Placed in Police Protection (Section 46, Children Act 1989)
- Arrested and Detained (Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984)
- Remanded by the Court (Children and Young Persons Act 1969) and then accommodated under Section 21, Children Act 1989.
- Held in Secure Accommodation (Section 25, Children Act 1989).

In certain situations, it will not be possible to complete the full fostering approval process of the Connected Person before the placement begins and in these cases, the procedure required for a Regulation 24 placement will need to be followed in order to allow the child’s immediate placement with the carer.

7.1 Regulation 24 Immediate Placement with Connected Person

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.

It is important to remember that Regulation 24 placements last for only 16 weeks (sixteen) beginning from the date the child is placed with the carer. At the end of the 16 weeks period the child should either return home to his or her parents (if this is appropriate and in the child’s best interests) or longer-term placement options for the child’s care should be ready for implementation. If it is not, the allocated social worker must be able to demonstrate the progress of the Care Plan and the reasons for the delay.

In exceptional circumstances, this temporary approval can be extended for a further period of up to 8 weeks (if it is likely to expire before the

assessment is completed) or until the outcome of the Independent Review (if the outcome of the assessment is that the Connected Person is not approved and seeks a review of the decision - see Assessment and Approval of Foster Carers Procedure.

Before deciding whether to extend the approval, the Local Authority must consider if the placement is still the most appropriate placement available, and it must be considered by the Fostering Panel before the above approval is given.

7.2 Criteria for making a Regulation 24 Immediate Placement

The following criteria should be considered when making a Regulation 24 immediate placement:

- An immediate/emergency placement is required.
- The identified placement is deemed to be in the best interests of the child.
- The placement may last for only 16 weeks unless the Department can demonstrate the assessment of the child's needs and the assessment for the approval of the Connected Person as a foster carer are imminent.
- The suitability of the arrangements must be assessed – See Fostering Assessment Procedures.
- A written agreement has been signed by the carer who agrees:
 - a. To care for the child as if s/he were a member of the family.
 - b. To sign agreements for checks and Police, Health, Local Authority and Education references on all persons over 18 years who live in or have regular and substantive contact with the household.
 - c. To allow a local authority officer to visit at any time.
 - d. To keep information confidential.
 - e. To comply with Court Orders and/or the local authority's requirements about contact.
 - f. To permit the child to be removed at any time if the local authority decides it is no longer a suitable placement.

8. Procedure for making a Regulation 24 Placement - Responsibilities of Social Work Teams

8.1 Suitability Assessment

Before any placement with a Connected Person can be approved by the named responsible person, the child's social worker must assess its suitability, including the level of support likely to be required and the effect of the proposed placement upon the child's contact with parents, siblings and other relatives and friends who are significant to the child. In making such an assessment of suitability:

- The proposed carer must be interviewed
- The accommodation must be inspected and
- Information must be obtained about other persons in the household.
- The proposed carer and all members of the household aged 18 and above must be checked with the Police Child Abuse Vetting and Barring Team, the family's GP and Children's Social Care records.

Matters to be taken into account when assessing the suitability of a Connected Person to care for the child are:

- a. The nature and quality of any existing relationship with the child
- b. Their capacity to care for children and, in particular in relation to the child (or children) concerned, to provide for his/her physical needs and appropriate medical and dental care; to protect the child adequately from harm or danger including from any person who presents a risk of harm to the child; to ensure that the accommodation and home environment is suitable; in relation to the child's age and developmental stage, to promote his/her learning and development; to provide a stable family environment which will promote secure attachments for the child, including promoting positive contact with parents and other connected persons, unless this is not consistent with the child's welfare.
- c. State of health (physical, emotional and mental), and medical history including current or past issues of domestic violence, substance misuse or mental health problems
- d. Family relationships and the composition of the household, including particulars of all other members of the household, their age and the nature of any relationship with the Connected Person and each other including any sexual relationship; any relationship with the parents; any relationship between the child and other members of the household; other adults (not members of the household) likely to have regular contact with the child; any current or previous domestic violence between members of the household, including the connected person

- e. Their family history, including their childhood and upbringing, and the strengths and difficulties of their parents or others who cared for them; their relationship with parents and siblings and each other; educational achievement and any learning difficulty/disability; chronology of significant life events; particulars of other relatives and their relationships with the child and the connected person
- f. Any criminal offences
- g. Past and present employment and other sources of income
- h. Nature of the neighbourhood and resources available in the community to support the child and the Connected Person.

The home must be visited by the social worker as part of the assessment of the suitability of arrangements.

The child's wishes and feelings (subject to age and understanding) must be ascertained and recorded and wherever possible, an opportunity must be provided for the child to visit the home before the decision.

The views of parents/ those with Parental Responsibility must also be obtained.

The proposed carer should be given information about the assessment process which will follow if the placement is to last longer than 16 weeks, including the need for DBS checks and other agency enquiries on all members of the household aged 18 and over, as well as interviews with referees, adult children and ex-partners, which will be part of any such fostering assessment.

The social worker must arrange for the carers to complete applications for Disclosure Barring Service checks then send the completed applications as soon as practicable to the Fostering Service for checks to be made as part of the assessment of the carers. The check should be addressed to the manager of the Fostering Team - see Section 9.1, Assessment of Connected Persons.

The child's placement with a Connected Person must be part of the Care Plan, which should be drawn up before the placement begins or, in exceptional circumstances, within a maximum of ten days of the placement starting.

8.2 Written Agreement with Carer

Prior to the placement, a written agreement must be completed by the child's social worker for signature by the carer. In the agreement, the carer must agree:

- a. To care for the child as if s/he were a member of the family.
- b. To sign agreements for checks and Police, Health, Local Authority and Education references on all persons over 18 years who live in or have regular and substantive contact with the household.
- c. To allow a local authority officer to visit at any time.
- d. To keep information confidential.
- e. To comply with Court Orders and/or the local authority's requirements about contact.
- f. To permit the child to be removed at any time if the local authority decides it is no longer a suitable placement.

8.3 Obtaining Approval for the Placement

The child's social worker must obtain approval for the immediate placement and the proposed financial arrangements to support the placement from the nominated person, in Warrington this is the Assistant Director of Targeted Services.

8.4 Notifications of the Placement

The child's social worker must notify the placement to all those consulted and involved in the decision-making process.

In order to ensure the appropriate arrangements to pay carers are in place (see paragraph 8.6), a change of circumstances form must be completed and distributed within 24 hours of the placement commencing. The child's electronic recording system must also be updated to reflect the changes.

The change of circumstances form must also be sent to:

1. The conference and review Unit. This notification will trigger, if necessary, the appointment of an Independent Reviewing Officer, who will contact the social worker to make arrangements for a Case Review.
2. The appropriate health trust, local education service and Children's Services Authority for the area where the child is placed. These notifications must be made in writing advising of the placement decision and the name and address of the home where the child is to be placed. The responsibility for this sits in the Conference and Review Unit. It will be necessary for the social worker to ensure that the child is registered with a GP, Dentist and Optician, either retaining practices known to them or in the area where they are to be placed.

3. In relation to a first child in care placement it will also be necessary for the social worker to arrange an initial health assessment. The social worker must also complete a Personal Education Plan (see Education of children in care Procedure).

8.5 Referral for Full Assessment

Once the decision is taken to assess relatives or friends as carers, the allocated children social worker must complete a referral and email it to the duty service of the Fostering Team.

The Fostering Service will commence a full Assessment which should be completed within 16 weeks of the start date and will book the case into the Fostering Panel. The completed Assessment will be submitted to the Fostering Panel by the social worker and the assessor.

The social worker will ensure that the Core Assessment and Care Plan are available for the Fostering Panel with a recommendation as to whether or not to recommend approval of the Connected Person.

The Fostering Panel will receive the reports and give advice and guidance about further areas for assessment.

8.6 Financial Support to the Placement

Financial support to Regulation 24 carers is arranged by the children's social worker at fostering rates for the 16 week assessment period.

If the assessment of need identifies that the child has specific needs that require additional financial support, approval must be sought by the social worker from the relevant service manager.

9. Responsibilities of the Fostering Service

The Fostering Service holds responsibility for the assessment and approval of all Regulation 24 care arrangements once children have been placed with the connected person.

The service will:

- Undertake the full Assessments of Connected persons as foster carers.
- Carry out the financial assessments for all Connected Persons.
- Complete a support plan (in the form of a written agreement) for all Connected Persons.
- Advise Case Reviews of children in placements with Connected Persons and Family Group Conferences where a placement with a Connected Person is being considered.
- Provide ongoing support and advice where necessary to individual carers.

- Ensure that Connected Persons who are approved as foster carers receive a review one year after approval and then every other year thereafter - see Review of Foster Carers Procedure.
- Provide information and advice on all aspects of kinship care to social workers, other agencies and members of the public.

The Fostering Service is responsible for undertaking the Full Assessment of the carers, the carers' home and members of the household aged 18 years and over who are not the proposed carers.

They also hold responsibility for securing from the carers all relevant agreements (detailed below). The following must be addressed on the Full Assessment.

Medical Record on Proposed Carer

The carers' consent must be sought. If consent is given it must be evidenced by the carer's written signature on the form. The form can then be sent to the carers' GP.

DBS Checks

The carers' consent must first be sought. If consent is given it must be evidenced by the carers' written signature on the DBS check form. This should be sought at Viability Assessment stage as DBS checks can be delayed. The check should be addressed to the manager of the Fostering Team.

The consents to DBS and medical checks are to be sought as soon as the placement is proposed, with the aim that the completed checks are made available prior to the beginning of the placement.

9.1 Assessment of Connected Persons

Standard assessment processes may disadvantage carers who are Connected Persons because they have a different profile to orthodox foster carers.

Such carers should be approved on their ability to provide care that is in the best interests of the child they are caring for.

Assessments look at the balance between the strengths and limitations of the carers and seek to balance risk and need. Providing the safety of the child is not compromised, a plan for addressing any concerns identified within the assessment should be put into place through the assessment and presented to panel with the full assessment.

9.2 After the placement is approved

The Fostering Service is responsible for providing support to the carer.

The carers will be invited to attend existing fostering support groups and to take part in the training programme available to foster carers. They should be given the same information as that provided to other Warrington foster carers, including information on practical issues such as overnight stays and contact as they are sometimes unsure about the legal implications of many situations that arise when caring for a child.

The Fostering Service is responsible for providing any equipment that the carers may need to enable them to meet the specific needs of the child.

All Regulation 24 carers are allocated to a social worker from the Fostering service.

After approval by the Agency Decision Maker, if the assessment identifies that the child has specific needs that require additional financial support; this will be calculated by the Fostering worker and agreed by the service manager.

10. Visits to the Placement - Statutory Responsibilities

Children in care who are in Regulation 24 placements are subject to the usual children in care requirements - see Social Work Visits Procedure.

The child's social worker must visit the child in the placement once every week during the first 4 weeks of the placement until the first Case Review. Thereafter the visits must be every four weeks during the period of the temporary approval.

At each visit the social worker must seek the views of and speak with the child and the carers. The child should be given the opportunity to be seen alone by the social worker and the child's bedroom should be seen at each visit.

The Fostering Social Worker has a duty to visit the placement once every four weeks.

11. Support Services to Connected Person Carers

Where a Connected Person is approved as a carer for the child, they will be paid the basic Foster Care Allowance.

These rates are paid by the Fostering Team once the carer has been fully approved.

Such carers often have a range of practical support needs, which may include issues around housing, finance, transport, education and health.

They are also sometimes in need of emotional support and advice about difficult contact arrangements, strained family relationships and behavioural problems in the children they are caring for. It is the role of the Supervising Social Worker to assist the carers with these needs.

Providing support to carers who are Connected Persons is an important aspect of sustaining a placement. It is essential that social workers work collaboratively with all members of the family and other involved agencies, in order to fully support the placement and to avoid the risk of placement breakdown.

The support needed by the carers is likely to vary and it is the responsibility of the assessing social worker from the Fostering Team to construct a support package, which reflects the individual circumstances of the placement as well as the needs of the child. The support package should be produced in the form of a written agreement between the Department and the carer and should outline the plan of support with clear timescales and a date for review of the plan.

Connected Person carers also have the same rights of access to the foster carer training provided by the Department, as well as the parenting groups and specialist support provided by the Placement Support Team.

Written information should be made available to children, parents and Connected Person carers. The booklet includes details about the family's rights and the services available to them. It also contains information on the options and arrangements families can make for their children, the services available and how to get them, how assessments are made, and the options for financial support and the family's rights to use the complaints procedure.

12. Long-Term Legal Options

See also Permanence Planning for Children in Care procedures.

For some children, reunification with parents may not be an option. In these cases the possibility of long-term placement with their Connected Person carer should be explored.

There are essentially three ways of achieving long-term placement with Connected Persons.

These options are:

- The child remains with the carer under a Residence Order.
- The carer obtains a Special Guardianship Order in respect of the child.
- The carers are assessed as adopters for the child and the child remains accommodated until an Adoption Order is obtained.

The Department must be satisfied that the proposed placement option is in the child's best interests.

The aim in deciding the most appropriate legal option should be to empower the carer and to minimise the Department's role in caring for the child as long as this is consistent with the child's best interests.

13. Role of the Fostering Panel

See also Fostering Panel Procedure

The Fostering Panel sits on a monthly basis and will recommend approval of long-term placements of children in care with carers on completion of a full Assessment.

Paperwork must be submitted to the Panel Administrator prior to the Panel date.

The assessing social worker from the Fostering Team has responsibility for presenting the full assessment to Panel along with the child's social worker. The carer is always encouraged to attend the panel.

The recommendation of the panel is then shared with the Agency Decision Maker, if the recommendation is approved, a Foster Carer agreement is signed by the carer.

Annex B: Caring for Somebody Else's Child – 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. The child is not a child in care.</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 child in care.</p> <p>Relative may perceive the parents to be unable to care for the child; or the parents may be dead or otherwise not available (e.g. in prison); 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 child in care and so the local authority must approve the relative or friend as a local authority foster carer. 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 child in care 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 'a child in care' and a friend or relative applies for an order, or</p> <p>The child may have been in care 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>Children in Care: 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 in care, 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 in care 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 in care 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 child in care 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 and 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 judgment ruled that allowances must be the same for all foster carers, whether or not family & 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 was in care prior to order.</p>	

Financial support – discretionary	LA has discretion to make one-off or regular payments under section17 Children Act	LA has discretion to make one-off or regular payments under section17 Children Act	<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 a child in care. Any allowance reviewed annually.</p>	<p>Entitled to an assessment for financial support under the Special Guardianship Regulations 2005 if child in care 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 offpayments or regular adoption allowance may be paid.</p>
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Annex C: 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

Address:

Unit 21, Carlson Court
116 Putney Bridge Road London,
SW15 2NQ

Tel: 020 8812 3600

E-mail: info@actionpf.org.uk

Advice line: 0808 808 2003

info@prisonersfamilieshelpline.org.uk

Addaction

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

www.addaction.org.uk

Address:

67-69 Cowcross Street
London EC1M 6PU

Tel. 020 7251 5860

Email: 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

Address:

25 Corsham Street,
London
N1 6DR

Tel: 020 7553 7640

Email: 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

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

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

Address:

Saffron House,
6-10 Kirby Street,
London
EC1N 8TS
Tel: 020 7421 2600
Email: mail@baaf.org.uk

Children's Legal Centre

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

www.childrenslegalcentre.com

Address:

University of Essex
Wivenhoe Park
Colchester
Essex
CO4 3SQ
Tel: 01206 877 910
E-mail: 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

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

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.

www.familyfund.org.uk

Address:

4 Alpha Court
Monks Cross Drive
York

YO32 9WN

Tel: 0845 130 4542

Email: info@familyfund.org.uk

Family Rights Group (FRG)

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

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

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

Address:

87 Blackfriars Road
London

SE1 8HA

Email: info@fostering.net

Tel: 020 7620 6400

Fosterline: 0800 040 7675
Email: fosterline@fostering.net

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

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

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

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

Address:

Fourth Floor 74 Great Eastern Street

London

EC2A 3JG

Tel: 020 7739 8494

Email: 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

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

4 Barnfield Hill,
Exeter EX1 1SR.

0300 4000 636

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

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

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

Address:

Park Place 12 Lawn Lane

Vauxhall

London

SW8 1UD

Telephone: 020 77359535 55

Parents Against Drug Abuse (PADA)

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

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

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

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

24 hour advice line: 0800 77 66 00

Text: 82111

Email: frank@talktofrank.com

Voice

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

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

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

Address:
48-50 St John Street
London
EC1M 4DG
Tel: 020 7336 8445
Parents helpline: 0808 802 5544