**Options for permanence- Newham Children’s Social Care**

The objective of permanency planning is ‘to ensure that children have a secure, stable and loving family to support them throughout childhood and beyond and to give them a sense of security’ (DfE, 2015). Permanence is about having a family for life and a sense of belonging; identity and connectedness. At its heart are the quality and continuity of the relationships children build with their carers, regardless of placement type.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Remain at home/Rehabilitation** | **Private Fostering** | **Informal Family Arrangement for Care** | **Connected Carer** | **Unrelated foster care (and residential care)** | **Child Arrangements Order** | **Special guardianship order (SGO)** | **Adoption** |
| **Route into care arrangements** | The focus is to ensure that children and young people are supported to remain at home where this is safe and risk assessed. | 1. The child may be at risk of becoming ‘looked after' and a friend or relative applies for an order, or 2. The child may have been ‘looked after' and their foster carer or other relative/friend applies for an order. 3. 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 or given leave of the court to apply for SGO.   Or, there can be benign reasons, e.g. after parent' death and in line with a prior agreement with the birth parents and the carer.  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.  Close 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 looked after child  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.  Alternatively the local authority may choose to place a child into residential care where this is considered to meet the child's needs.  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.  The child is a looked after child 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.  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.  The child is not a looked after child  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 | | | | | | 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.  A foster carer can apply for an adoption order after one year of caring for the child.  Other informal carers could apply for an adoption order if the child has lived with them for a period of 3 years or with leave of the court. |
| **Parental Responsibility** | Remains with parents/those holding PR. | PR shared with parents and anyone else with parental responsibility for the child. The special guardian may exercise parental responsibility to the exclusions of all others with PR, apart from another special guardian. Limitations include taking child out of the country or changing the child's name  Shared by parents and holder of Child Arrangements Order  Remains with birth parents if the child is accommodated under section 20 CA, or if the child is subject to a care order or emergency protection order, the local authority shares parental responsibility and determines the extent to which it make to delegated to others  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 and has delegated responsibility unless alternative legal orders are in place, e.g. Special Guardianship, Adoption or Child Arrangements Orders  birth parents | | | | | | Transfers to adopters and legal relationship with birth parents and siblings is severed |
| **Approval Basis** | Support and intervention offered is with those holding PR  Consider FGC/KFT/Edge of Care offers  Reunification-see link in policy for guidance. Placement at home with parents. | 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.  Appointed by court  Following  Application  Approved as local authority foster carers in accordance with Fostering Services Regulations. (If the child is looked after, carers must be approved as foster carers even if close relative.)  None  The arrangement is assessed by LA, but the carer is not ‘approved' as a local authority foster carer. The arrangement may be prohibited if assessed by the local authority as unsuitable. | | | | | | Adoption agency assesses and approves prospective adopters, court makes order regarding specific child. If the child is not a looked after then notice of intention to adopt must be given to the LA who then carry out an |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Private Fostering** | **Informal Family Arrangement for Care** | **Connected Carer** | **Unrelated foster care (and residential care)** | **Child Arrangements Order** | **Special guardianship order (SGO)** | **Adoption** |
| **Duration** | So long as placement remains in line with the child's care plan as determined by LA or the making of an alternative order (unless section 20 when parents have the right to move the child from care.)  Subject to discretion of person with PR  Subject to discretion of Subject to discretion of person with PR and readiness of private foster carer | | | | Age 18 | Age 18 unless varied or discharged by the court before the child reaches 18 years | Permanent lifelong relationship |
| **Placement supervision** | Statutory visit s to the child by social worker and f supervision foster carers by supervising social worker.  None  It is not a placement, but there are statutory visits to the child by social worker (minimum 6 weekly in first year then 12 weekly) | | | | None | None | When a 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** | Statutory reviews of the child's care plan (minimum 6 monthly) and annual reviews of local authority foster carers' approval.  None  It is not a placement, but the LA may do formal reviews in addition to on­going assessment during visits | | | | None | None | See above |
| **Support services** | Placement support to meet the child's identified need.  Statutory social worker  Young person may be entitled to leaving care support services.  Support to meet the child's needs including health plan and personal education plan (PEP);  Training and practical support to foster carers in accordance with the Fostering Services Regulations, National Minimum Standards and Children's workforce Development Council standards.  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 Children Act 1989  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 Children Act 1989 | | | | No entitlement  (But LA has discretion to provide services / support for child/family under section 17 Children Act 1989) | If child was looked after prior to making the SGO, LA must assess for need with 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 National Minimum Standards.  Three year rule applies where for first three years, it is the placing authority who is applicable and after first three years it is the local authority in which the child resides |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Private Fostering** | **Informal Family Arrangement for Care** | **Connected Carer** | **Unrelated foster care (and residential care)** | **Child Arrangements Order** | **Special guardianship order (SGO)** | **Adoption** |
| **Financial Support-Entitlement** | Child benefit or other universally available for children is not payable.  Weekly allowance to be in accordance with fostering payments policy and procedure.  Guardian's Allowance payable if both parents have died, or the only surviving parent cannot be found or serving 2 years or more prison sentence.  Can claim child benefit and any other universally available benefits for children if not being paid to the parent.  Financial responsibility to maintain the child remains with holders of PR  Can claim child benefit and any other universally available benefits for children if not being paid to the parent.  Financial responsibility to maintain the child remains with holders of PR | | | | Can claim child benefit and any other universally available benefits for children if not being paid to the parent. | Can claim child benefit and any other universally available benefits for children if not being paid to the parent. | Entitlement to assessment for financial support (part of adoption support) if child looked after prior to order.  Can claim child benefit and any other universally available benefits for children if not being paid to the parent. |
| **Financial support- discretionary** | Fees are payable under the payment for skills model.  LA discretion to make one-off or regular payments under section 17 Children Act 1989  LA discretion to make one-off or regular payments under section 17 Children Act 1989 | | | | LA has discretion to pay Child  Arrangements order allowance - usually if child was previously fostered by the carers, or exceptionally if making Child Arrangements order prevents child becoming looked after. Any allowance reviewed annually at a minimum | 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.  Subject to assessment as above and for former foster carers can include an element of remuneration.  Discretionary regular or one off payments.  Any allowances reviewed annually at a minimum. | Subject to assessment, one off payments or regular adoption allowance may be paid |
| **Contact** | As set out in the care plan with details of frequency and supervision clarified.  We have a duty to promote contact with the child's family  Private arrangement with birth parents or person with PR  Private arrangement with birth parents or person with PR | | | | Private agreement  Or as defined by the court or discretion of the person with PR | Agreed as part of SGO or at discretion of the SG with PR.  May be subject to a section 8 contact order. | As agreed as part of the adoption order.  Legally at the discretion of the adopter.  May be subject to a Contact Order |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Age under 7 years | | Age 7 - | 10 years | Age 11 years + | |
| No informal or connected family and friends arrangements available. | No informal or connected family and friends arrangements available | No informal or connected family and friends arrangements available | No informal or connected family and friends arrangements available | No informal or connected family and friends arrangements available | No informal or connected family and friends arrangements available |
| Permanency Plan includes Twin Track or Parallel Planning until it is clear that a return to birth family is not possible | | | |  |  |
|  | Family Group Conference should be offered |  | Family Group Conference should be offered |  | Family Group Conference should be offered |
| Adoption | Formal Approved Kinship Foster Care | Adoption | Formal Approved Kinship Foster Care | Long Term Fostering | Formal Approved Kinship Foster Care |
| Long Term Fostering (needs Head of Service approval if child is under five) | * Special Guardianship Order * Child Arrangements Order * Care Order - possibility of mover to SGO/RO | Long Term Fostering  Special Guardianship (with existing foster carer) | * Care Order - possibility of move to SGO/RO * Special Guardianship Order * Child Arrangements Order | Special Guardianship (with existing foster carer) | * Special Guardianship Order * Child Arrangements Order * Care Order - possibility of move over to SGO / RO |
|  | Where the child is 0 - 3 years, if at the end of the legal process if carer is not able to consider SGO / RO then the adoption route must be followed |  |  |  |  |

Permanence Options for children of different ages

The table below may be of use to understand permanence planning for different ages of children and young people when relatives are and are not available. This should be used as **a guide only** to support your judgement, decision and planning.