



Guidance Note for Social Workers: Foster Carers Wishing to Convert to Special Guardianship Order (SGO)

Where an SGO is deemed to be in the best interest of the child/young person and the Foster Carers, Birmingham Children's Trust is committed to assisting and resolving any practical and financial barriers that may create a disincentive for Foster Carers to take on an SGO. **This guidance must be read in conjunction with the [Financial Policy for Permanent Arrangements on Tri.x](#).**

When such a placement is identified, a visit will be made to the carers by the Social Worker for the child to share information and discuss the SGO process. If it assists a visit may be undertaken jointly with the Family and Friends Team. To arrange such a visit this please contact the Family and Friends Team via the Duty Desk on 0121 4644945 or email SGOandConnectedPersonsManagers@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Discussions should also take place with the child/ren, parents, IRO's, Supervising Social Workers and any other relevant party to determine if the plan to progress with an assessment for an SGO is the most appropriate permanence route for the child and carers.

If progression to SGO is agreed then the carers need to complete and sign the **consent to assessment sheet**. A referring email and the consent form is then sent to the Family and Friends Team at fostassesspss@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk. The email needs to include: the names of the child/ren and the carers, ID numbers, a brief summary and confirm that the plan of an SGO is supported. The assessment will then be allocated to a Social Worker within the Family and Friends Team. **A viability assessment is not required for SGO conversions.**

The SGO assessment will be completed with reference to the information contained within the original fostering assessment and the most recent AFHR. If the carers are connected persons the Form C assessment will be updated with current information. If the carers are mainstream carers then a Form C assessment will be completed. The current fostering DBS and Medical will normally be used for the SGO assessment and only updated if considered necessary during the assessment. References will be completed to seek views in respect of the new proposed arrangement and any changes since the initial application.

Foster Carers will already be receiving fostering payments for the child and a principle is established that where it is agreed that an SGO is in the child's best interest consideration can be given by the Permanence Resource Panel to agree payments for that child up until the age of 18. The Family and Friends team will take the case to Permanence Resource Panel and feedback the decision to the child's Social Worker; the carers will receive written confirmation of any allowance agreed. This can be completed before an assessment is undertaken if required.

Once the assessment is prepared the applicants will be supported to make an SGO application by the Social Worker for the child/ren.

If you have any queries in relation to SGO conversions or simply wish to discuss a possible conversion then please contact: **Family and Friends Duty Desk 0121 4644945.**