

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

	Private fostering	Family care (informal)	Family and friends foster care	Unrelated foster care	Child Arrangements Order	Special guardianship order (SGO)	Adoption	
Route into the caring arrangement	<p>This is a private arrangement whereby the child is being cared 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>Close relative means grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (by full blood, half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or a step parent.</p> <p>The child is not a 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 assessed as not providing suitable care.</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 child in care and so the local authority must assess the relative or friend as a local authority connected care carer for that specific child.</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; and lives with a foster carer.</p> <p>Alternatively, the local authority may assess that the child's needs are best met in a residential children's home.</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 a child 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 or for other reasons, e.g., after parents' death.</p>	<p>Children in care: the Local Authority's Agency Decision Maker determines that the best way to achieve permanency for the child for the remainder of their childhood is through 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 can 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 and is delegated by the parents to the private foster carer.	Remains with birth parents and 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 Child Arrangements Order.	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 parental responsibility, apart from another special guardian.	Transfers to adopters and relationship with birth parents is severed.	
Approval basis	The arrangement is assessed by local authority who determines whether this is suitable or not. The carer is not 'approved' by the local authority. The arrangement may be prohibited if assessed by the local authority as unsuitable.	None	Approved by the local authority as foster carers in accordance with Fostering Services Regulations.		Appointed by court following application.	Appointed by court, following application from the applicant. The Local Authority must investigate the matter and prepare a report for the court dealing with the suitability of the applicant to be a special guardian.	The Regional Adoption Agency assesses and approves prospective adopters. The Family Court makes order regarding specific child. If the child is not a child in care, then notice of intention to adopt must be given to the Local Authority who then carries out an assessment / report for the court.	

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<b>Duration</b>	Subject to discretion of person with parental responsibility and readiness of private foster carer.	Subject to discretion of person with parental responsibility	So long as the care arrangement remains in line with child's care plan, as determined by the Local Authority		Age 18 unless varied or discharged by the court before the child reaches 18 years.	Age 18 unless varied or discharged by the court before the child reaches 18 years.	Permanent lifelong relationship
<b>Placement supervision</b>	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	None	When child is placed for adoption by the Local Authority, the placement is supervised and there are statutory reviews. Once the adoption order is made, none.
<b>Review of placement</b>	The Local Authority reviews the suitability of the private fostering arrangement every year 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
<b>Support services</b>	Provision of advice and support as determined necessary by the Local Authority, 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	None prescribed by legislation, but the Local Authority 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 and National Minimum Standards.  Young person may be entitled to leaving care support services		None prescribed by legislation, but the Local Authority 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	If child was in care prior to making the Special Guardianship Order, the Local Authority must assess the need for special guardianship support services. The Local Authority has discretion whether to provide support.	Entitlement to assessment for adoption support services, which may be provided at discretion of Local Authority in accordance with Regulations.

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<b>Financial support – entitlement</b>	<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 parental responsibility.</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 parental responsibility.</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 will be paid by the Local Authority.</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 Special Guardianship Support plan) if the child was in care prior to order.</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 the child was in care prior to the making of the order.</p>
<b>Financial support – discretionary</b>	<p>The Local Authority has discretion to make payments under section 17 Children Act following a financial assessment if deemed in the child's best interest and the parents and the private foster carers are struggling financially</p>	<p>The Local Authority has discretion to make payments under section 17 Children Act following a financial assessment if deemed in the child's best interest and the parents and the informal carers are struggling financially</p>	<p>A fostering allowance will be paid in line with the child's age and their needs.</p> <p>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>The Local Authority has discretion to pay.</p> <p>Child Arrangements Order allowance – usually if child was previously fostered by the carers, or exceptionally if making Child Arrangements Order prevents child becoming a child in care. Any allowances are means tested and are reviewed annually.</p>	<p>Entitled to an assessment for financial support under the Special Guardianship Regulations 2005 if the child was 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 are means tested and reviewed annually.</p>	<p>Subject to assessment, one off payments or regular adoption allowance may be paid.</p> <p>Any allowances are means tested and reviewed annually.</p>