

Bath and North East Somerset Council

Family and Friends Care Policy

Working draft policy May 2012

This policy document sets out the arrangements for promoting and providing support to meet the needs of children placed with family and friends carers in Bath and North East Somerset (for a summary of the law relating to different options when looking after someone else's child, please see **Annex A**).

The policy document is currently a working draft subject to approval by the Bath and North East Somerset Council Cabinet. Once approved it is intended that the policy will be regularly reviewed and made freely and widely available.

The policy document has been written in accordance with *Family and Friends Care: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities*. As required by this guidance the document sets out Bath and North East Somerset Council's approach to supporting family and friends care in different circumstance and the ways in which needs may be assessed and support provided if required. The document also gives information and guidance for Children's Service and other services' staff and for members of the public on the different forms of family and friends care, the legal framework governing family and friends care and sources of further support and information.

Bath and North East Somerset Council policy on Family and Friends Care

Bath and North East Somerset Council is committed whenever possible and consistent with children's welfare to supporting families to look after their children. The Council believes that in most cases children's needs are best met within their birth family by their parents or when this is not possible with close relatives.

Within the legal framework set by the Children Act 1989 and associated regulations and guidance the Council will, when a child appears to be in need, carry out an assessment and if necessary provide support to the child and their family. This includes assessing the needs of children in private fostering or informal family and friends care arrangements and providing such support as is required by law and on the basis of assessed need.

The Council is committed to avoiding the need for children to come into care whenever possible consistent with children's welfare. This means that families will be encouraged and supported to make private arrangements with family or friends if children cannot be looked after by their parents for any reason. This will be within the framework set out in this document.

Support offered may include a Family Group Conference in some cases when this is agreed with families as a helpful way to support them in making their own arrangements. A Family Group Conference is an independently facilitated process to support extended families in making plans to meet children's needs when there are concerns about their welfare.

Any decision that a child needs to come into care will be based on a thorough assessment that their needs require them to be looked after by the local authority and by agreement with parents or others with parental responsibility or by order of a court. When a child needs to come into care the Council is committed to making

foster placements within the child's family and friends network – with a 'connected person' – as long as this arrangement is assessed as suitable and is then approved as a foster placement following a full fostering assessment.

The Council is committed to supporting permanent substitute care with family or friends carers under residence orders, special guardianship or adoption, when this is assessed as in the child's best interests. Such support will be provided on the basis of assessment of support needs and within the framework set out in this document.

Assessment processes

Initial assessments of children in need are normally completed within 10 working days of referral. The assessment includes a visit or visits by a social worker who will need to see the child(ren), their parents and any family or friends caring for them.

An initial assessment may conclude that a more comprehensive assessment is required. This is known as a core assessment and will normally be completed within 35 working days of referral.

Placement of a child in care with relatives or friends (connected persons) can only be made following an assessment of suitability (viability assessment) and either temporary or full approval as foster carers. The viability assessment is carried out by the child's social worker together with a member of the family Placement Team. Once a connected person is temporarily approved as a foster carer they will be subject to a full fostering assessment. If there is no urgency to place with the connected person(s) the full fostering assessment should be completed before the child is placed.

Fostering assessments entail a more in depth assessment including full checks on all members of foster carers' household, take up of references and a number of visits to assess the suitability of carers and their ability to meet fostering standards. Such assessments must be completed within 16 weeks when a child is placed under temporary approval as foster carers with family or friends, and will be completed by a Family Placement Team social worker.

Assessments of family or friends as prospective special guardians or adopters are also in depth assessments carried out by Family Placement Team social workers, similar in depth and scope to the full fostering assessment.

Assessments of support needs for special guardians, adopters or residence order holders may be carried out by a social worker following an assessment that the child(ren) is a child in need, and that the proposed care arrangement is suitable to meet the child(ren)'s needs.

Values, principles and objectives

- Consideration of children's welfare and best interests will always be at the centre of the work that we do.

- The Bath and North East Somerset Family and Friends Care Policy is based on the principles underpinning the *Children Act 1989*. A key principle of the Act is that children and young people should be enabled to live within their families unless this is neither in their best interests nor consistent with their welfare.
- The local authority has a duty to promote informal arrangements within families to enable children to be cared for wherever possible by family members. We will support families to make their own arrangements to care for their children and to avoid the need for the children to be looked after by the local authority.
- When a child cannot remain with their immediate family, and the local authority is considering the need to look after the child, we will make every effort to identify potential carers within the child's network of family or friends who are able and willing to care for the child.
- A residence order, special guardianship order or adoption order may help to ensure the child's sense of belonging and security when a successful return to the child's birth parents is not possible.
- Support from the local authority will be based on the assessed needs of the child and Bath and North East Somerset will ensure that family and friends carers (whether or not they are approved foster carers) are provided with support to ensure that children do not come into care or remain in care longer than is needed.
- The wishes and feelings of children and young people, family and friends carers and parents will inform the policies and procedures of the local authority.

Evidence base

This policy is based on evidence of what works in supporting family and friends carers to meet children's needs, and knowledge of the services which carers and children want to be available to them. Staff who are responsible for implementing the policy will be offered appropriate training on the issues which family and friends carers face, the obligations, powers and responsibilities of the local authority and the contents of this policy.

What is family and friends (kinship) care?

This is an arrangement where a child who cannot be cared for by their parents goes to live with extended family, friends, or other 'connected persons'. It used to be known as kinship care. There are many different forms of family and friends care:

- Private fostering
- Family care with a 'close' relative (informal)
- Family and Friends/Connected Persons Foster Care (looked after child)
- Residence or Special Guardianship Order
- Adoption.

Further information about each of these categories is given below.

A 'connected person' is a new term introduced by *The Children Act 1989. Guidance and Regulations Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review 2011* <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DCSF-00185-2010>. A 'connected person' is a relative, friend or other person connected with a child. The latter is someone who would not fit the term 'relative or friends', 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 a child-minder, a teacher or a youth worker.

The Children Act 1989 defines 'close relative' as a sister, brother, aunt, uncle or grandparent (by full blood, half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or a step-parent.

Private fostering

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative' for 28 days or more. A close relative is defined as 'a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step parent'. It does not include a child who is looked after by the local authority. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and the carer, the parent still holds parental responsibility and agrees the arrangement with the private foster carer.

The parent and carer have a legal responsibility to inform the local authority; failure to do so constitutes a criminal offence. When the local authority knows of a proposed or existing arrangement it must assess the situation to ensure the arrangements are satisfactory and that they are in the best interests of the child. If, following the assessment, it is decided that the arrangement can continue, a social worker will visit the child and family on a regular basis (minimum 6 weekly in first year, then 12 weekly) to safeguard the welfare of the child and ensure the arrangements remain satisfactory.

The reasons why a child may be looked after through a private fostering arrangement may include:

- A child being sent to this country for education or health care by their birth parents from overseas
- A child living with a friend's family as a result of parental separation, divorce or arguments at home
- A teenager living with the family of a boyfriend or girlfriend
- A parent's hours of work or study making it difficult for them to use ordinary care to look after their child

A private foster carer is responsible for the day to day care of the child and the care should be continuous. The parent (or person with parental responsibility) retains the responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child. The local authority will need to be made aware of the situation to check everything is satisfactory.

The local authority has a duty to assess and monitor the welfare of all privately fostered children. If the local authority thinks that an arrangement is unsuitable and the child cannot be returned to his or her parents, the authority must decide what action to take to safeguard the child's welfare. This may mean providing support to the carer or, in some circumstances, finding alternative local authority accommodation.

The person who is fostering the child under a private arrangement has a responsibility to tell the local authority about certain changes in circumstances, such as change of address, any criminal convictions they acquire or anyone living at the address acquires, loss of employment etc. Changes should be notified in advance and, if this is not possible, then within 48 hours of the change.

If the arrangement comes to an end, the person who is fostering the child should also advise the local authority within 48 hours in writing that the arrangement has come to an end. They should also notify the local authority of the name and address of the person who will be taking on care of the child and where the child is now living.

Family Care (informal)

If they are not looked after by the local authority, children can live with a 'close' relative - their aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters or grandparents - without outside involvement.

The relative does not have parental responsibility which remains with the parent(s) but may do what is reasonable to safeguard or promote the child's welfare.

However the local authority may become involved if it appears that services may be necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a Child in Need. This could arise for example if the child is referred by any service working with them for assessment as a child in need including if there were safeguarding concerns, or as a result of a referral by the child's family or by the relatives looking after the child asking for assessment of their support needs.

In these circumstances the local authority has a responsibility under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 to assess the child's needs and provide any services to meet any identified needs of the child, this may include discretionary financial support.

Family and friends/ Connected persons foster carers

Where a child is looked after by the local authority, we have a responsibility wherever possible to make arrangements for the child to live with a member of their family who can be approved as a foster carer.

The child may be accommodated voluntarily with the agreement of the parent(s) or may be subject to an interim care order or care order. If it is a voluntary agreement, parental responsibility remains with the parent(s); the local authority will share parental responsibility if the child is subject to an interim care order or care order and

will share limited parental responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child if s/he is subject to an emergency protection order.

Arrangements will be made to assess the suitability of the relative or friend to be a foster carer for the child. This suitability assessment will be carried out by the child's social worker together with a social worker from the Family Placement Team.

The child can be placed with the family members prior to full approval as foster carers for up to 16 weeks. This temporary approval can only be extended in exceptional circumstances. During the period of temporary approval the carers will receive a fostering allowance to support the child. A Family Placement Team social worker will carry out a full foster carer assessment and provide practical help and advice as well as emotional support. They can also provide any equipment that the carer may need to help them to care for the child.

Once approved as foster carers, the carers will have a supervising social worker from the Family Placement Team to provide them with support and supervision; and they will receive fostering allowances for as long as they care for the child as a foster carer.

While the child remains a looked after child, as a foster carer, they will be expected to cooperate with all the processes that are in place to ensure that the child receives appropriate care and support, for example cooperating with the child's social worker and promoting the child's education and health needs.

Residence Orders, Special Guardianship Orders and Adoption

A Residence Order is a legal order made by a court specifying who the child should live with and gives them parental responsibility if they do not have it already (shared with child's parents). A Residence Order will usually last until the child is 16.

A court can order a joint Residence Order, which is an order to say that the child shall spend time living with more than one carer. Family and friends carers may apply for an order after the child has lived with them for one year.

A Residence Order provides security for the young person but if parental responsibility is shared with other non-resident parents, agreement will have to be reached about the upbringing of a child.

The Residence Order holder takes the general day to day decisions concerning the upbringing of the child, and these should be exercised without interference from the non-resident parent and do not require consent of others with parental responsibility.; These will be decisions about how the household will function and the child's daily routine. The parent with parental responsibility is able to have a say in the major decisions concerning the upbringing of the child. Such decisions can include where the child should attend school, what religion the child should be brought up in, the child's name etc.

Discretionary allowances may be paid to relatives or friends with whom a child is living under a Residence Order. The carer has the right to apply to the local authority for a Residence Order allowance to assist with accommodation and maintenance of the child (Children Act Schedule 1 section 15)

Bath and North East Somerset will only consider such applications where:

- The child is assessed as a child in need and is unable to be cared for by either birth parent **and**
- A residence order is assessed as the best way of meeting the child's needs **and**
- The child would otherwise need to be looked after by the local authority.

Residence Order holders are entitled to claim child benefit and child tax credits and these will be taken into account when assessing Residence Order allowances.

A Special Guardianship Order is a new option introduced under the *Adoption and Children Act 2002*. It can offer greater security without absolute severance from the birth family as in adoption.

Relatives may apply for a Special Guardianship Order after caring for a 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.

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 financial support.

Where entitlement to an allowance has been established the applicants will be financially assessed and advised in writing of the allowances to be paid.

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.

Bath and North East Somerset has a range of services to support adopted children and adoptive parents. The support to be provided to individual adoptive families is set out in an Adoption Support Plan and this may include financial support.

Where a decision in principle has been made for the payment of allowances to adopters a financial assessment will be carried out to decide the level of financial support payable.

Adoption or Special Guardianship? Special guardianship may be more suitable than adoption if:

- An older child would struggle to deal with the status of being adopted.

- The child has a good relationship with the parent(s) or members of the family, and/or the carer and parent(s) have a good relationship and special guardianship will enable the carers to fulfil the main care role without disrupting this relationship. There is a close relationship between the carer and the parent. (e.g. carers are the grandparents)
- More than 'occasional contact' is planned between the child and the birth parent(s) and family.
- The child stands to inherit money or receive money in some other way.
- Adoption is against the potential carer's culture or beliefs.
- There is a need to maintain cultural links and the need is greater than the ability of the adopters to provide this link.
- It is in the best interests of the child rather than remaining in the care system or being adopted.

When deciding to apply for a Special Guardianship order the welfare of the child or young person and what is in his or her best interests is the paramount consideration.

Supporting contact

Contact with their immediate families is generally a positive experience for children who are not living with their parents, helping them to maintain a sense of belonging and identity. Contact arrangements should meet the needs of the child. Most children living with members of their extended families will be in contact with one or both of their parents and often also with other relatives, this will help to promote positive relationships.

The local authority has a duty to promote contact for all children in need, although there are differences in the way that duty is expressed depending on whether or not the child is looked after.

The local authority is required to promote contact between a child who is not looked after but who is living away from home and his or her family where it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. The local authority has a duty to try to promote contact between a looked after child and his or her family unless it is consistent with the child's welfare.

New research into family and friends care by the Family Rights Group highlights that although family and friends placements can work well for children, contact can be problematic. Management of contact can often be a source of considerable anxiety and conflict for family and friends carers. It can place emotional and practical strains on all the parties involved. Family dynamics and relationships may be fundamentally changed, particularly for grandparents and others who are becoming 'second time round' carers and children may not understand why they are being brought up by relatives, whilst parents may resent the fact that their children do not live with them. Family mediation may be helpful. It can help parties to communicate better and resolve disputes, taking account of the child's wishes in a supported environment.

Formal mediation may be accessed by a solicitor; other types of mediation may be available via the local authority.

Where there are child protection concerns, there may be a need for the involvement of Children's Services to support safe contact arrangements. Contact may be limited through a court order and it may need to be carefully managed, monitored and supported, to ensure that it does not become unsettling and possibly harmful for the child. In some circumstances the management of contact arrangements and independent supervision of contact can be supported by Children's Services. Family and friends foster carers who need advice and support regarding contact arrangements can access more information from their Social Worker.

Other family and friends carers who are concerned about contact should telephone the Children and Family Assessment and Intervention Team who may be able to help (01225 396312 or 396313).

The National Association of Child Contact Centres, staffed by volunteers, provides information on its website www.naccc.org.uk and through its helpline 0845 4500 280. There is a local contact centre in Bath. Families make their own arrangements about using this type of contact. Please see <http://www.bathchildcontactcentre.co.uk/> or call 07791 482030 for details about the contact centre in Bath. Further details about contact centres in surrounding areas are available from the Family Information Service (0800 073 1214 ;) <http://www.1bigdatabase.org.uk/>)

Information about services and support

National and local sources of information and support may be found in **Annex C**. In the first instance, please contact the Family Placement Team (01225 395332) for support, advice and information which is specifically about fostering and the Family Information Service (0800 073 1214) for information about local and national organisations and services that support families.

Training

Bath and North East Somerset tries to ensure that all foster carers, approved by the local authority, are equipped with the knowledge and skills to meet the care needs of children placed with them, and to achieve the knowledge and skills outlined in the Children's Workforce Development Council's (CWDC).

Training, Support and Development (TSD) Standards for foster carers. As the context of family and friends foster care differs from other types of foster care, an amended set of standards has been produced for family and friends carers. Working to achieve the standards can provide a focus for the work of support groups and opportunities for family and friends foster carers to meet other foster carers. It is expected that all approved foster carers, whether unrelated or family and friends, complete the training and meet the standards. Other local authority training is also available to approved foster carers including family and friends carers. For further details, please contact the Fostering Team.

Generic evidence based parenting programmes are available to all parents in Bath and North East Somerset. For information on parenting programmes contact Family Information Service (0800 073 1214) for more information or see

<http://www.1bigdatabase.org.uk> or

<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/educationandlearning/parentalSupport/Pages/default.aspx>

Financial support

Discretionary financial assistance may sometimes be available when the local authority has assessed a Child in Need under Section 17(6) of *The Children Act 1989*. Please contact your social worker or ring the Children and Family Assessment and Intervention Team who may be able to help (01225 396312 or 396313).

Looked After Children If a child is 'looked after', then the person caring for them, for tax, benefit and tax credit purposes, is a foster carer.

As a foster carer they will receive financial support from Children's Services in two parts: an allowance; and a fee. The fee element needs to be declared for tax purposes but the allowance should not be declared as it is not a fee and is non-taxable.

Foster Carers cannot receive child benefit or child tax credit for the foster child, nor include them on housing benefit and council tax benefit claims. They may be able to receive working tax credit as a self-employed foster carer however or possibly income support if single.

Family and Friends carers (informal – child not looked after) the new carer can apply to take over any child benefit or Disability Living Allowance (DLA). The carer can make a child tax credit claim (or additional claim); can include the child in housing benefit and council tax benefit claims; and can apply for carers' allowance but there is more 'conditionality' (i.e. conditions attached to eligibility) if applying for income support or Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) compared to foster carers.

Management accountability

The senior manager who holds overall responsibility for the Family and Friends Care Policy is the Care and Young People Service Manager who may be contacted on 01225 477914.

The implementation of the policy will be monitored and reviewed annually

The policy will be shared with local authority staff and partner agencies (for example, Housing) to ensure that all practitioners and managers operate within its framework and it is applied in a consistent and fair manner across the authority. It will be disseminated widely so that anyone who is considering becoming a family and friends carer can be aware of its content and be clear about how to contact the local authority and other agencies for further information about relevant services.

Complaints

When a family or friends carer is not satisfied with the level of support provided to enable them to care for a child, they can have access to the Bath and North East Somerset Complaints Procedure. Our aim would be to resolve any such dissatisfaction without the need for a formal investigation but where an informal resolution is not possible a formal investigation will be arranged. Bath and North East Somerset is committed to the delivery of quality services that meet your needs. There may be times when things go wrong and you do not receive the standard of service you expect. If you feel that you have good cause for complaint, then we need to know. We will deal with your complaint confidentially unless this is not possible, for example if legislation applies.

Step one - Go direct

If you know the specific service that your complaint is about please take it up with the relevant officer or team manager in the first instance. The team manager must respond to your complaint within 10 working days. If you are not sure who to speak to, you can call in to any council office, contact our Complaints Procedure Manager.

Step two – Independent investigation

If the Team Manager is unable to resolve the complaint, then with your consent a further investigation of the complaint will be undertaken by a person independent of the team providing the service.

Our response

We aim to reply to your complaint within 10 working days. If we can't reply fully within that timescale we will let you know.

Local Government Ombudsman

If you are not satisfied with the final response you can ask for your complaint to be examined by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO).

Please contact our Complaints procedure manager for further information.

Contact Telephone Numbers

Care and Young People Service Manager 01225 477914

Family Placement Team 01225 395332

Children and Family Assessment and Intervention Team 01225 396312 or 396313

Complaints Procedure Manager 01225 477931.

ANNEX A: 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.</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>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 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 looked after, 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 looked after then notice of intention to adopt must be given to the LA who then carry out an assessment / report for the court.

Family and Friends Care: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities

	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 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.

Family and Friends Care: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities

	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 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. 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 allowance may be paid.</p>

Annex B: National 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

Advice line 0808 808 2003

Email: info@offendersfamilieshelpline.org

Addaction

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

www.addaction.org.uk

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

Tel: 020 7553 7640

Email: admin@adfam.or.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.

<http://www.ace-ed.org.uk/>

General advice line: 0808 800 5793

Exclusion advice line: 0808 800 0327

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

Beating Eating Disorders

0845 634 1414

<http://www.b-eat.co.uk/>

Benefits

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/index.htm>

http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/index/your_money/benefits.htm

British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF)

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

www.baaf.org.uk

Tel: 020 7421 2652

Email: mail@baaf.org.uk

Childline

0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk

Children's Legal Centre

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

www.childrenslegalcentre.com

Child Law Advice Line: 08088 020 008

Community Legal Advice - Education: 0845 345 4345

Email: clc@essex.ac.uk

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.adviceguide.org.uk/index/your_money/benefits.htm (benefits advice)

COSMIC (Children of Substance Misusing Carers)

Groups for children and young people whose parents have been, or still are, dependent on drugs or alcohol

01934 426444

Cruse

01761 417250

www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk

www.rd4u.org.uk (website for young people who have been bereaved)

Department for Education

Lists details of telephone helplines 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

ERIC

Childhood incontinence.

0845 370 8008

www.eric.org.uk

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

Tel: 08449 744 099

Email: info@familyfund.org.uk

Family Mediation Helpline

Provides information about local family mediation services.

www.familymediationhelpline.co.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

Advice line: 0800 801 0366 (including advice about contact)

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

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

Helpline: 0845 434 9585

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.

www.grandparentsplus.org.uk/advice

Advice line: 0300 123 7015

Email: advice@grandparentsplus.org.uk

The Hideout

Domestic abuse site for children and young people

www.thehideout.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

Tel: 020 7553 9920

Email: admin@mentoruk.org

Money saving sites

www.moneymadeclear.org.uk

www.moneysavingsexpert.com

www.freecycle.org (recycling furniture and other goods)

One Space (lone parents)

Includes advice about finances

www.onespace.org.uk

National Association of Child Contact Centres

0845 4500 280

<http://www.naccc.org.uk/>

National Association of Kinship Carers

Email: nakinshipcarers@gmail.com

Or post on <http://grou.ps/nakc/>

National Domestic Violence Helpline

0808 2000 247

www.womensaid.org.uk

www.refuge.org.uk

0845 122 8609 (for perpetrators)

www.respectphonline.org.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

Tel: 0300 4000 636

Email: enquiries@nfm.org.uk

NSPCC 0808 800 5000

www.nspcc.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

Families helpline: 0808 808 2003

Email: mail@partnersofprisoners.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

Tel: 020 7735 9535

Parents Against Drug Abuse (PADA)

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

<http://www.btinternet.com/~padahelp/>

Families Helpline: 0845 702 3867

Parentline Plus (Family Lives)

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

24 hour advice line: 0808 800 2222

Email: parentsupport@familylives.org.uk

Samaritans

08457 90 90 90

www.samaritans.org

SANE

Mental Health charity

0845 767 8000

www.sane.org.uk

Shelterline

Housing issues

0808 800 444

www.shelter.org.uk

Talk to Frank

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

Young person's advice line: 0808 800 5792

Email: info@voiceyp.org

Winstons Wish

Childhood bereavement, including suicide

08452 03 04 05

www.winstonswish.org.uk

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

Parents helpline: 0808 802 5544

Annex C: Local Organisations and Information for Family and Friends Carers

Family Information Service

One stop source of information for children, young people and families and those who work with them in Bath and North East Somerset

0800 073 1214

www.1bigdatabase.org.uk or www.bathnes.gov.uk/fis

Avon and Somerset Police

101 (non-emergency calls) or 999 in an emergency

<http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/>

Bath Next Link

Next Link provides specialist domestic abuse services for women and children in in Bath and North East Somerset.

01225 466989

http://www.nextlinkhousing.co.uk/bath_index.htm

Citizens Advice Bureau

0844 848 7919

<http://www.cab-banes.org/>

Council Tax and Housing Benefit

01225 477777

<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/advicebenefits/benefits/Pages/Housing%20and%20Council%20Tax%20Benefit.aspx>

Curo Group (formerly Somer Housing Group)

Housing association covering the South West.

01225 366000

http://www.somer.org.uk/section_1.aspx

Domestic Violence and Abuse

01225 477188

<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/communityandliving/crimeprevention/domesticviolenceabuse/Pages/default.aspx>

Drug and Alcohol Service

<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/healthandsocial/helpforadults/Pages/Drugsandalcohol.aspx>

01225 477971

Fostering Team (Family Placement Team)

01225 395332

http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/HEALTHANDSOCIAL/FOSTERINGADOPTING_LAC/Pages/default.aspx

Housing Services

01225 477000

<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/Housing/Pages/default.aspx>

Jobcentre Plus

0845 604 3719

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Dio1/DoltOnline/DG_201704

Libra Project

Domestic abuse, accommodation and support

01225 354659

womensservices@julianhouse.org.uk

Royal United Hospital (RUH)

01225 428331

<http://www.ruh.nhs.uk/>

Social Care (Social Services)

Referral and Assessment Team

01225 396312/3

<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/healthandsocial/childrenandfamilycare/Pages/FirstContact.aspx>

Out of office hours emergency

01454 615165

Further information about organisations and helplines may also be found on the Your Family, Your Voice website: http://www.yourfamilyyourvoice.co.uk/site/information_support_17.asp

ANNEX D: references

Department for Education (2011) *Family and Friends Care: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities*

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/Family%20and%20Friends%20Care.pdf>

The Children Act 1989. Guidance and Regulations Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review 2011

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DCSF-00185-2010>.