

# Permanency Strategy

2019-2021

Enter



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# Foreword

As set out in our Children and Young People's Plan (Young and Yorkshire 2) in North Yorkshire we want all children to live happy, healthy lives and achieve the best possible outcomes they can. Whilst most children and young people are able to do this, we know that at times families require support to overcome difficulties and challenging circumstances. When this happens, we work with families, offering targeted interventions to support them to stay together. However, if it is not safe for a child to stay at home the local authority will step in to give them the care, support and stability they need, as set out in our Looked after Children and Care Leavers Strategy 'We Care Because You Matter'.

Looking after children is one of the most important jobs a Local Authority does, we are committed to doing it well and improving outcomes for the children in our care. To help us 'do it well' the permanency strategy is used alongside our 'Looked after Children and Care Leavers Strategy' which are both connected through cross-cutting policies such as the Fostering strategy and our Family and Friends policy

We have an aspirational, strengths-based model of practice in North Yorkshire, providing the framework for all social work activity with children and their families. Options for permanence range from supporting children to remain within the

family setting, or providing caring and loving fostering or adoptive families and other types of placement for those children who are unable to live with their birth family. Permanence for children is achieved through our commitment to working alongside families, forming relationships that enable us to identify networks in family's lives and ensuring all children that we work with are supported to remain connected to those that are important to them. When children do become looked after, we are committed and determined to keep alive for every child, the opportunity for them to return to their family where this is a realistic option for them.



County Councillor Janet Sanderson  
Executive Member for Children  
and Young People's Service



Stuart Carlton  
Corporate Director of Children  
and Young People's Service

# 1.0 - Introduction

We are dedicated to supporting our Looked after Children to live happy, healthy lives and achieve the best possible outcomes they can. This strategy has been developed to outline how we will achieve permanence for our children and young people.

For children who are no longer able to remain with their birth family, research has shown that outcomes are significantly improved for them when they are in an environment that is safe, secure, demonstrates empathy, warmth, stability and the child feels cared about.

In North Yorkshire there are a small number of children, for who it is not in their best interests to return to their family home after a period of care. For these children we will make plans to achieve permanence for them. Central to our decision making is understanding their wishes and feelings which inform our plans for permanence. It is important that all age groups are able to achieve permanence, whether this is in a foster family, adoptive family, or in other types of placement where they can achieve a sense of security, stability and belonging.

The Permanency framework creates three aspects, as outlined in the Care Planning Guidance 2011:

## 1. Legal

Defining who has parental responsibility;

## 2. Emotional or Psychological

The child feels attached to an adult who provides a stable, loving and secure relationship;

## 3. Physical or environmental

The child has a stable home environment.



## 2.0 - Core principles

When developing permanence plans the below principles are followed to achieve the best possible outcomes for children in our care.

We will do our very best to ensure all children in our care grow up in stable and secure arrangements and are supported to safely leave care when appropriate.

All planning, service delivery and evaluation will start with the needs of the child/young person.

We will aim high to help children and young people overcome gaps in their early care and strive to achieve the standards that any parent would expect for their child.

Where it is safe to do so, the views, opinions, needs and priorities of Looked after Children will inform everything we do

We will work with looked after children and young people, along with their parents and carers, to shape their assessment, planning, resourcing and services that support and care for them.

We will ensure that provision reflects a child's individual needs, including age.

We will identify what needs to change in North Yorkshire to make a real and sustainable change to outcomes for all children and young people who are looked after.



## 3.0 - Our Objectives

The overarching objective of planning for permanence is to provide safe, stable, and secure placements with loving families to support the child through childhood and prepare them for adulthood. To ensure we place the child at the centre of our permanence planning process, there are two questions that we must keep at the core of everything we do:

**“How are the child’s permanence needs being met?”**

**“Would this be good enough for my child?”**



**Where it is necessary for a child to leave their family, there are a number of key objectives at the centre of our Permanency Planning:**



**Family members and friends should always be considered in the first instance.**



**A child should be in care for as short a time as needed to secure a safe, supported return home.**



**If it is safe to do so we will put plans in place to support the child to return to their family.**



**If a child cannot return home, plans must be made for alternate permanent care whilst keeping alive the options to support a child to leave care where appropriate.**



**Permanence should always be secured through the appropriate legal order to meet the child’s needs.**



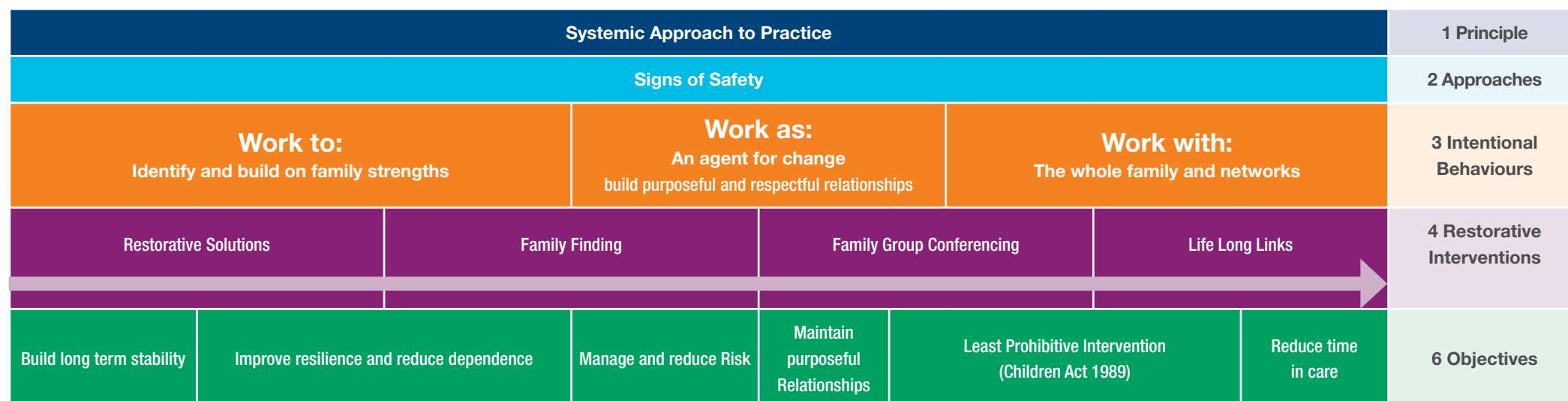
**Where it is not in the child’s best interest to live within the family network we will identify alternative permanent carers. This may be through adoption, long term foster care, Child Arrangement Orders or Special Guardianship Orders.**



**If an older child wants to live independently, and the service thinks this could be suitable, then this may be considered.**

## 4.0 - How we will provide support

The diagram below lays out the model of practice we follow in North Yorkshire when supporting children, young people and their families to overcome challenging and difficult circumstances. We believe that stable relationships should be established between workers, children, young people and their families, and we should always look for strengths within the work that is done. This model of practice acts as the foundation upon which we develop individual plans to ensure the children and young people we support achieve the best possible outcomes



## 5.0 - What to consider when a child cannot remain at home

When the decision has been made that a child cannot remain at home, there are several options which we will consider:

### Family Finding

Our Family Finding model seeks to build or maintain a young person's family support network. The model identifies relatives and other supportive adults who could provide permanency, sustainable relationships and support through the transition to adulthood and beyond. With a focus on the child's safety, families are empowered to formulate realistic and sustainable plans to meet their long-term needs. Plans might be focused on keeping the child/young person safe at home, or on improving the long term outcomes for the child.

This could include:

- Increasing the likelihood of the child returning home after a period in care;
- Finding a family member or friend who will care for the child if the child is unable to remain at home;
- Improving well-being for the child;
- Improving placement stability and the child's support network;
- Reducing the likelihood of re-entry into care; and
- Increasing a child's sense of belonging.

The Family Finding process is carried out by the child's social worker. The model works on the principle that relatives should be located and consulted regardless of where they may live. The model considers that parents may be seeking assistance in planning and providing for the basic and future needs of their children that relatives may be best placed to provide.

The aim of Family Finding is to overcome the limitations of traditional case work which may isolate children and parents, by incorporating extended 'kinship' groups and seeing the child in the context of the family.

### Family Group Conferencing

In North Yorkshire, we see the family as part of the solution. We hope to engage with families at the earliest possible opportunity.

Family Group Conferencing (FGC) is another child-centred, family focused approach to build relationships and support networks. FGC focuses on bringing together members of the family to take part in voluntary sessions (or 'conferences') to find their own solutions and formulate a 'family plan' to resolve issues.





Unlike Family Finding (which is led by the Social Worker) Family Group Conferencing is referral led. All families should be referred to FGC as part of the safeguarding process (prior to an Initial Child Protection Conference). Family members will be supported by a Family Group Conferencing co-ordinator who will help the family plan the voluntary meeting and will act as a chair. The co-ordinator will also address any worries or concerns they might have.

The 'conference' allows information to be shared with and by the family and gives the family 'private family time' to talk among themselves with the aim of creating a plan that addresses the concerns raised. FGC also gives the family the opportunity to identify resources and support that will be required from agencies and the family to make the plan work. The family plan should then be reviewed through a review 'conference' to consider how the plan is working and make any adjustment necessary

Family Group Conferencing, similar to Family Finding, places planning and decision making in the hands of the family. When used effectively, Family Group Conferencing can improve outcomes for children by:

- Enabling families to plan and take control of their lives;
- Putting the child at the heart of the decision;
- Giving the child a voice;
- Supporting the sharing of honest information and concerns with the family;
- Making the family aware of the 'non-negotiable' and the 'bottom line';
- Clarifying the role and responsibilities of all involved;
- Identifying resources and shortfalls in resources; and
- Focusing on solutions rather than problems.

### Identifying the Best Permanency Option

When deciding on a permanency option we will work with our multi-agency partners to understand the child's needs and take the below factors into account:

- The age of the child;
- How is stability going to be achieved?;
- Long-term stability – a permanent home with a sense of family, community, culture and continuity of relationships and identity;

- Short-term stability – the quality of the child's attachments and the impact of uncertainty;
- Educational experiences, links with extended family members, hobbies and friendships;
- Understanding what a child wants from the placement and supporting the development of a relationship between the child and their carer to create a family environment;
- Will it be possible to find permanence through adoption? and
- Could the child thrive in more independent placements?

### Supporting Reunification with Birth or Extended Family

If it has been identified in a child's permanence plan that they are able to return to their family home, it is important to:

- Clearly communicate to the family what needs to happen to enable the child to return home, and the timescales;
- Understand family ties and long-term relationships with family, school and the community; and
- Use Family Group Conferencing (where appropriate) to help facilitate the above.

## Siblings

It is important to maintain sibling relationships within a permanence plan. More successful outcomes occur for children placed together with their sibling. It is harder to place a sibling group together in certain circumstances, such as:

- They enter care at different time or have different needs related to past experiences, current behavioural or emotional needs or there is a significant difference in age; and
- They belong to a large sibling group.

Where it is not possible to place siblings together, children will be supported to understand the reasons for this and where it is in their best interests arrange sibling contact.

Where the plan is for adoption, the decision should be made early whether it is in the best interests of the children to be placed together or separately. Such decisions will be based on a balanced assessment of the needs of each child and the impact of the decision on each child.

## Direct family time

When it is in the best interests, it is important that the child remains in contact with their family. This maintains their identity, gives reassurance, provides an on-going source of information, gives the child permission to live with alternative carers, minimises the sense of loss and assists adopters if the child is placed for adoption.

Direct family time will work most effectively if all parties agree to the following:

- The plan for permanence;
- The parental role of the permanent carers; and
- The benefit of contact.

Direct family time is less likely to be effective if a parent:

- Disagrees with the plan for permanence;
- Does not accept the parental role of the permanent carer;
- Does not accept their own minimal role with the child;
- Is unreliable in their commitment to contact; and
- Has no significant attachment to the family

The views of the child, such as if they do not wish to have direct contact, must be considered and given considerable weight.

## Indirect family time

Any level of indirect family time with people from the child's past must be agreed, and accepted by all parties. They should agree on what format this will take and must be renegotiated if the child's needs change.

## Protected Characteristics

The child's wishes and feelings and their protected characteristics must be taken into account when establishing the right permanency placement. The placement should promote links for the child's race, culture, disability and religion where possible.

## Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs)

The IRO service has a statutory responsibility to chair a looked after child's review and to monitor the child's case on an on-going basis. An IRO will be appointed to each child with 5 working days of becoming looked after and will chair their Looked After Reviews; the initial review will be within 20 working days of becoming looked after followed by a second review within 3 months then by subsequent 6 monthly reviews. As part of this process, at the second review the IRO must be satisfied that the local authority has explained to the child and parents what the plan for permanence is.

It is the IRO's role to review and agree the plan for permanence, ensuring that it is the most appropriate for the child. Where it is not possible to identify a single plan for permanence at the second review, a 'twin track' or 'multi-track' plan will be identified and time scales will be attributed to any pieces of work that are needed to formulate a single plan for permanence.

The IRO also has a statutory responsibility for monitoring the child's case to ensure that there is no drift in implementing the permanency plan.

## 6.0 - Planning for permanency

At the core of everything we do is the question, “how are the child’s permanence needs being met?”. This is always considered when doing an assessment or intervention with a family. Along with our multi-agency partners we will work with the child and all relevant and connected persons to develop the right arrangement.

### The permanency planning process will:



### Assessing and Planning for Permanence

To identify the best permanence option, the assessment process will ask, “how will stability be achieved?”. Stability can be understood in the following ways:

- Ensuring continuity of care for children who are going to be in care for a brief period before going home and for children who are going to need a more permanent arrangement (short or medium term stability); and
- Providing a sense of a permanent home (long term stability).

An assessment of a child’s needs in relation to their Permanence Plan must:

- Focus on outcomes; and
- Consider stability issues, based on the child’s and family’s needs for long-term support and for links, including contact with their parents, siblings and wider family network.

The assessment will include:

- Outcomes for the child;
- Their wishes and feelings;
- The child’s and family’s support needs;
- How the child and family, friends/connected persons remain in contact when it is in their best interests; and
- Evidence that the plan is clearly linked to previous assessments of the child’s needs.

We will always work towards a return home where this is in the child’s best interest. At the same time we will develop an alternative permanence plan with clear time frames. If this is through court it will be subject to the Public Law Outline process which has a timescale of 26 weeks.

Even when the case is not before a court we will adopt the same approach when undertaking assessments to support achievement of a permanent outcome for the child within clear timescales.

To ensure the very best outcomes for the young people we care for, during permanence planning it is crucial we do not solely think in terms of episodic interventions (planning up to the transition to independence) but focus on the long-term outcomes for the young person. Working with the young person to understand their wishes and ambitions allows us to create plans that will build the foundations for adulthood, with a focus on planning for middle adulthood. To achieve this, plans need to support the development of strong networks and relationships that will endure, providing young people with the resilience and support that is needed in adulthood.

## 7.0 - Permanency and Local Placement

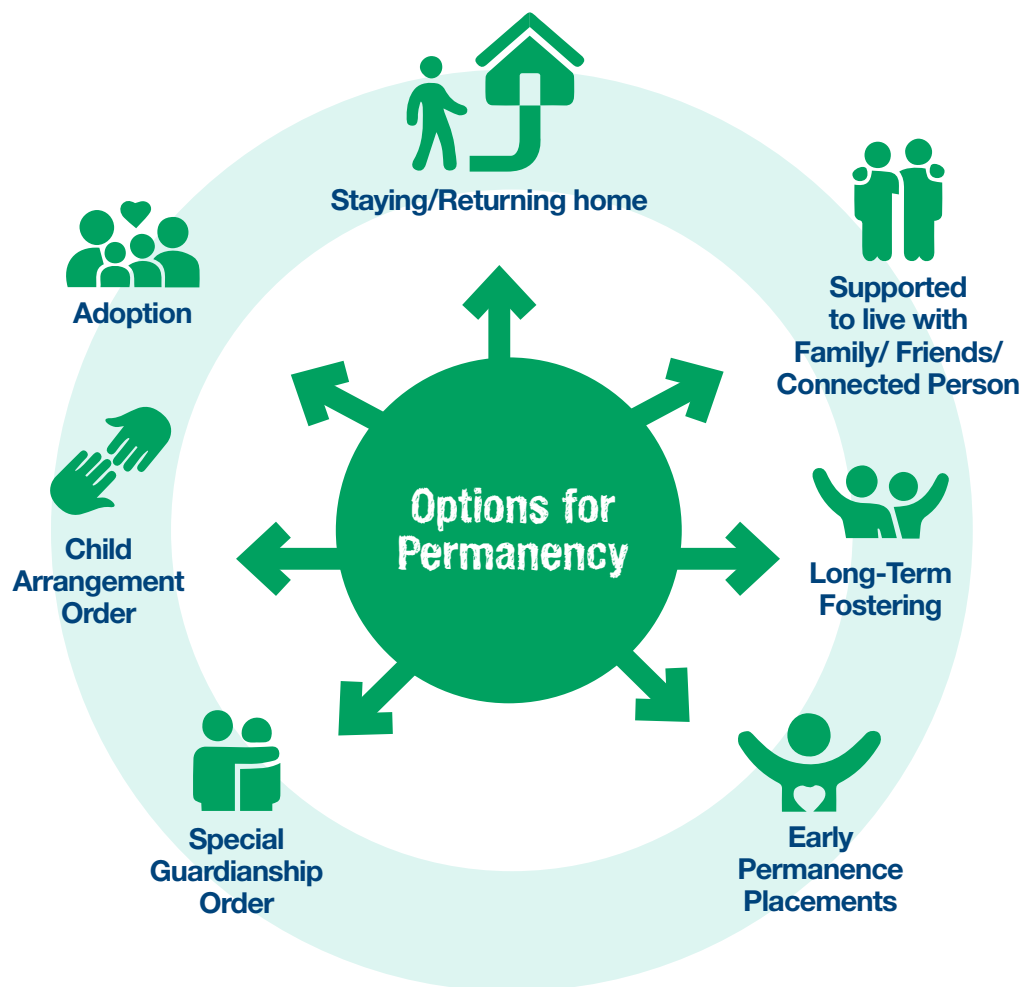
Where a placement is with long-term carers, it is important the child has access to the friends, family or community within which they were brought up. Enabling ongoing contact with their birth family will remain a priority

Any decisions to place a child away from their community will be based on their particular needs. Where this is in another local authority, the likely availability and cost of suitable local resources to support the placement must be explored. In the case of an adoptive placement, this will be required as part of the assessment of need for adoption support services, but should be carried out in relation to any Permanence Plan.

At every Looked After Child Review, the IRO will take the opportunity to discuss with the child, carers and social worker whether a return to home or back to the family network is appropriate. It is the duty of the IRO to consider this at every review and this is done with great sensitivity. Every child has a network and it is the responsibility of the IRO to ensure this network is explored. This keeps alive the option for the child to return home where it is safe, appropriate and in the best interest of the child.

## 8.0 - Options for Permanency

Taking the views of the child into account and the outcome of the assessment, enables us to make the right choices for permanence. The options that we have available to consider to meet the permanency needs of children are:



## **Staying / Returning Home**

Where it is possible and safe to do so, the best place to provide care is in the family. We will support the family to stay together and ensure that the home is a safe and caring place.

Although research has shown that supporting the family to stay together has a higher success rate than family reunification, this must be balanced against the risk of harm to the child and what the child wants.

### **What this means**

- Gives the best chance of stability
- The child remains with their birth family
- It is more likely that a family will stay together long term.

### **Other considerations**

- Will require continuing social work involvement.
- May not always be successful.

### **What this means**

- The child is cared for by family, friends or connected persons that they know and already have relationships with.
- The child retains their links to their birth families.

### **Other considerations**

- Staying at home or returning home will require continuing social work involvement.
- Family, friends or connected persons may not be available to, or may not want to, care for the child.

## **Supported to live with Family or Friends/ Connected Persons**

If a child cannot safely remain at home, early planning is undertaken in an enabling way to determine who should care for them. We work with the family/friend to secure an appropriate placement. This will be either be as part of the plan to return home or the preferred permanence option. It is important to establish at an early stage which relatives or friends might be able to provide the care the child needs. Family members do not need to be approved as connected persons, there are other means through which the local authority can support these arrangements.

## Long-Term Fostering

For children who are looked after, long-term foster care provides an important route to permanence.

The option of long-term foster care has proved particularly useful for older children who retain strong links to their birth families and do not want or need the formality of adoption and where carers wish for the continued involvement of the local authority. However we are clear that children should not languish in care because a plan of permanence has been agreed, the role of the family will always be revisited.

In 2015, the Government introduced the first regulations and guidance for long-term foster care in England. The aim was to support long-term foster care as a permanence option and to promote stable, secure and successful placements.

The 2015 Regulations and Guidance state that where the most appropriate route to permanence is long-term foster care, the child, foster carer(s) and the birth parents should be consulted. The foster carer(s) should have agreed to act as the child's foster carer(s) until the child ceases to be looked after.

The 2015 Regulations and Guidance also state that children who are in long term foster care may be visited less frequently by their social workers after their first year in a long-term placement, visits can be reduced to six monthly.

### What this means

- The local authority retains a role in negotiating between the foster carers and the birth family over issues such as contact
- There is continuing support to the child and foster family in a placement which is regularly reviewed.
- It maintains legal links to the birth family who can still play a part in the decision making for the child.

### Other considerations

- Lack of Parental Responsibility for the carers.
- Continuing social work involvement.
- Regular Looked After Reviews, which may be regarded as destabilising to the placement.
- Stigma attached to the child due to being in care.
- The child is not a legal member of the family. If difficulties arise there may be less willingness to persevere and seek resolution.
- Post care and/or post 18 the carers have no legal responsibility towards the young person.



## Early Permanence Placements

Designed to provide permanence at the earliest opportunity for babies and young children. An Early Permanence Placement (EPP) places the child with an approved adopter in a fostering placement whilst their case goes to court. If the adoption plan is agreed, and a Placement Order granted, they will be matched and adopt the child.

### What this means

- Early Permanence Placements provide consistency, safety and stability at a very early stage in a child's life.
- Reduces the number of moves that children experience before they achieve permanence.
- The child is no longer looked after.
- Parental Responsibility is transferred to the carers/adopters once the adoption order has been granted. Before this, the Local Authority holds Parental Responsibility for the child.
- Child centred, taking the challenges and risks away from the child and instead places them with the adults.

### Other considerations

- Early Permanence Placements are only suitable for a small number of children.
- The foster carer/adopter will be required to meet the child's birth family and support contact with the child's birth family (if appropriate while court proceedings are on-going).
- There is no absolute guarantee that the court will recommend adoption.

## Child Arrangements Orders

A Child Arrangements Order may be used to increase the degree of legal permanence in a placement with family or friends/connected persons, or a long-term fostering placement.

The Order confers Parental Responsibility, to be shared more equally with the parents than with Special Guardianship, which in some cases may be a more appropriate arrangement.

The holder of a Child Arrangements Order does not have the right to consent to the child's adoption nor to appoint a guardian; in addition, they may not change the child's name nor arrange for the child's emigration without the consent of all those with Parental Responsibility or the leave of the court.

Whilst support may continue for as long as the Child Arrangements Order remains in force, the aim will be to make arrangements which are self-sustaining in the long run. The making of a Child Arrangements Order can now be made until the child is 18.

The following people may apply for a Child Arrangements Order:

- A parent or guardian;
- A party to a marriage (whether the marriage is subsisting or not) where the child was brought up as a child of the family;
- A person with which the child has lived for 3 years (This need not be continuous but must not have started more than 5 years or ended more than 3 months before the making of the application); or
- A local authority foster carer with whom the child has lived for 1 year

## Child Arrangements Orders

- Where a Child Arrangements Order is already in force, a person who has the consent of those in whose favour the Child Arrangements Order was made;
- Where the child is Looked After, a person with the consent of the Local Authority;
- In any other case, a person who has the consent of all those with Parental Responsibility; and
- Anyone else wishing to apply, including the child, must apply to the court for leave to make an application for a Child Arrangements Order

## What this means

- Child Arrangements Orders give Parental Responsibility to the carer whilst maintaining the parents 'Parental Responsibility'.
- The child will no longer be looked after and there does not need further Social Work involvement, unless this is identified as necessary
- There is no review process.
- The child will not be Looked After and so less stigma is attached to the placement.

## Other considerations

- It is less secure than Adoption or Special Guardianship in that an application can be made to revoke the Child Arrangements Order. However, the Court making the order can be asked to attach a condition refusing a parent's right to seek a revocation without the leave of court.
- There is no formal continuing support to the family after the Order is made although in some instances, a Child Arrangements Order may be payable by the local Authority
- There is no professional reviewing of the arrangements after the Order unless a new application to court is made, for example by the parents for contact or revocation. (N.B. New application to court may be expensive to defend, and the carers would have to bear the cost if not entitled to assistance with legal costs).

## Special Guardianship Orders

Special Guardianship addresses the needs of children who need a sense of stability and security within a placement away from their parents but not the legal break with family that is associated with adoption.

Any of the following may apply for a Special Guardianship Order:

- A Guardian;
- A Local Authority foster carer with whom the child has lived for one year immediately preceding the application;
- Anyone who holds a Residence or Child Arrangement Order with respect to the child or who has the consent of all those in whose favour a Residence / Child Arrangements Order is in force;
- Anyone the child has lived with for 3 out of the last 5 years;
- Where the child is subject of a Care Order, any person who has the consent of the local authority; or
- Anyone who has the consent of all those with Parental Responsibility for the child.

The parents of a child may not become the child's special guardians.

Special Guardianship Orders offer stability, whilst they can be revoked, there are restrictions on those who may apply to discharge the Order. The leave of the Court, if required, will only be granted where circumstances have changed since the Special Guardianship Order was made.

Parental responsibility will be given to special guardians which will be shared with the child's parents. However, the special guardian will have the legal right to make all day to day arrangements. The parents have to be consulted and their consent required for: the child's change of name, adoption, placement abroad for more than 3 months and other fundamental issues.

A Special Guardianship Order made in relation to a child who is the subject of a Care Order will automatically discharge the Care Order and the local authority will no longer have Parental Responsibility

## Special Guardianship Orders continued

Special guardians may be supported financially or otherwise by the local authority and, as with adoptive parents, will have the right to request an assessment for support services at any time after the Order is made.

### What this means

- The carers have Parental Responsibility and clear authority to make decisions on day to day issues.
- There is added legal security to the Order. Parents need to apply to discharge the Order and will only be granted if a change in circumstances can be established since the original Order was made.
- It maintains legal links to the birth family
- The child will no longer be in care.

### Other considerations

- The order lasts until the child is 18.
- Does not necessarily bring with it the sense of belonging to the special guardian's family
- As the child is not a legal member of the family, if difficulties arise there may be less willingness to persevere and seek resolution.
- Although there are restrictions on applications to discharge the Order, such an application is possible and may be perceived as a threat to the child's stability
- Although a parent requires leave to apply for a Child Arrangement Order, they can apply for a Section 8 Order (i.e. Prohibited Steps Order or Specific Issues Order).

## Adoption

Adoption legally transfers parental responsibility for the child permanently to the adopter. The child is then deemed to be the child of the adopter(s) as if he or she had been born to them and the child's birth certificate is changed to an adoption certificate showing the adopter(s) to be the child's parent(s). The child will also acquire UK citizenship if they are not already a UK citizen (assuming they are adopted by UK citizen).

Adopters may be supported, including financially, by the local authority and will have the right to request an assessment for support services at any time after the Order is made.

Research strongly supports adoption as a primary consideration and as a main factor contributing to the stability of children, especially for those under four years of age who cannot be reunified with their birth or extended family.

### What this means

- Parental responsibility is held exclusively by the carers.
- The child is no longer Looked After
- No future legal challenge to overturn an Adoption Order is possible.
- The child is a permanent family member into adulthood.
- Decisions about continuing contact will usually be made by the new parents (on the child's behalf) who are most in touch with the child's needs, although this will be subject to any Contact Order made by the court at the time of the Adoption Order

### Other considerations

- Adoption involves a complete and permanent legal separation from the family of origin.
- There is no review process.



## 9.0 - Regional Adoption Agency (One Adoption North & Humber)

The regional adoption agency was established in 2017, 'One Adoption North & Humber', brings together the adoption services of 5 Local Authorities (North Yorkshire, York, East Riding of Yorkshire, City of Hull, and North East Lincolnshire).

The 'regionalisation' has increased the range of adopters available as each authority is no longer restricted by their own boundary. This means, for example North Yorkshire could now place a child with an adopter in Hull for no extra cost.

One Adoption North & Humber takes responsibility for recruiting, assessing and training potential adopters, with One Adoption Teams located in the five local authorities. The teams work alongside social workers to identify suitable, prospective adopters for children who have a plan for adoption.

By being able to access a larger pool of adopters from across the region when matching a child, it is likely to improve the quality of the match and speed up the process. Improving permanency by reducing delays and improving the longer term outcomes for children.

As well as helping assist with permanence planning and improving the matching and adoption process, moving to a regional adoption agency helps to ensure stability for adopted children through providing ongoing support and training right the way through the process.

One Adoption North & Humber work with adopters, adopted children, birth families, the voluntary and private sectors to deliver a range of adoption support services.

## 10 - Appendix A

### Appendix A: Care arrangements for children not living with parents.

#### Informal Family Care

Family or friends have chosen to take care of a child without involving the Local Authority (LA).  
The child is not a looked after child/has not passed the threshold for entry to care.

#### Private Fostering

A private arrangement where anybody without paternal responsibility and who is not a close relative cares for the child for 28 days or more.  
The child is not a looked after child/has not passed threshold for entry to care.

#### Family and Friends Foster Care

The LA has placed a child with family or friends who have been approved as suitable carers.  
The child is looked after  
May be voluntary agreement or subject to Care Order

#### Stranger Foster Care

The LA has placed a child with approved carers under section 20, or a Care Order  
The Child is looked after

#### Residential Care

In some cases, a residential placement may be a more appropriate option to meet the child's needs.  
The child is looked after

#### Possible permanency non-care outcomes Special Guardianship Order (SGO)

The Child may have been looked after and their foster carer or other relative/friend has applied for a SGO.

Or the child may be at risk of becoming looked after and a friend or relative is granted a SGO.

#### Child Arrangement Order (CAO)

Routes into a CAO are in line with those for a SGO.

Relatives are able to apply for a CAO or a SGO after having a child living with them for one year

#### Adoption Order

The LA may decide that the child should be placed for adoption.

A LA approved foster carer can apply for an adoption order if the child has lived with them for a period of three years.

#### Return Home

## Contact us

W: [www.northyorks.gov.uk](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk) E: [customer.services@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@northyorks.gov.uk)

T: **01609 780 780** (Monday to Friday 8.00am - 5.30pm closed weekends and bank holidays)

**North Yorkshire County Council, County Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 8AD**

You can request this information in another language or format at

[www.northyorks.gov.uk/accessibility](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/accessibility)