

Family and Friend Care Policy and Placement of Looked After Children with Connected Persons Procedure.

Summary Description. Guidance for staff involved in the planning for Children and Young People who are unable, or who may be unable to return to live with their birth parents and for whom placement with family or friends ("connected persons") is therefore considered.

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1 Introduction

This draft document provides policy and associated procedural guidance to staff involved in planning for children and young people who are unable, or who may be unable, to return to live with their birth parents. The preferred option for every child who cannot live with their parents is to grow up in the care of their family or with an adult with whom they have an existing significant relationship.

Where birth parents cannot look after their children, most families will find a solution from within their family network. They may need temporary or short term help from children's services and this can be provided under Section 17 of the 1989 Children Act.

Some families will set up private fostering arrangements to solve their difficulties and these should be notified to the local authority under the private fostering regulations - see **Private Fostering Procedure**.

This document refers only to the procedure for placements with Connected Persons made for children who are **Looked After**.

A connected Person is defined as "a relative or other person connected with a child. The latter is someone who would not fit the term 'relative or friend', but who has a **pre-existing relationship** with the child. It could be someone who knows the child in a more professional capacity for example a child-minder, a teacher or a youth worker"

Relative is defined as "a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of the full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step-parent"

Where parents agree to their child/children being placed with Family or Friends (connected person) without the need for the child to be received into the care of the local authority this option will be considered in the first instance. No child or young person should have to become LAC for the sole purpose of enabling financial, practical or other support to be provided to the child's carer. Whenever appropriate, Reading Borough Council will provide any necessary support services without the child becoming looked after child unless the child meets the criteria at section 20 (1) of the 1989 Act and requires accommodation.

Decision by the LA that a child should become looked after child or cease to be looked after, will be based on an assessment of the child's needs and circumstances.

Where the child or young person is likely to be, or is already a looked after child a **Family Group Conference** will need to be organised by the child's social worker so that the "family group" can decide on the most suitable member to care for the child. The nominated family member (connected person) will be assessed under the same arrangements as '*stranger*' foster

Carer(s) and the same statutory guidance, standards and regulations will apply.

Where this is the case the child's social worker will undertake the "Temporary Approval Assessment" using the Temporary Approval Assessment Form (Appendix 1).

The assessments for temporary approval and subsequent full approval of a connected person will only be undertaken for a looked after child by virtue of:

- Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 (accommodated);
- Section 31 or Section 38 Children Act 1989(made subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order);
- Section 25, Children Act 1989 (held in secure accommodation);
- Section 46, Children Act 1989 (placed in Police Protection);
- Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (arrested and detained);
- Remanded by the Court (Children and Young Persons Act 1969) and then accommodated under Section 21, Children Act 1989;

2 Legislation

A Looked After Child can only be placed with an approved foster carer, but Regulation 24 of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010, allows a child to be placed with a Connected Person for up to 16 (sixteen) weeks or while the carer is being assessed as an approved foster carer.

The Children Act 1989 requires that the Local Authority seek to promote the upbringing of children whenever possible by their own families.

This document should be read in conjunction with the following:-

- The Children Act 1989.
- Care Planning, Placement and Case Review 2010.
- Family and Friends Care: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities
- The Fostering Service Regulations and National Minimum Standards 2011.
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002 and Associated Regulations and Guidance
- Children Act 2004
- Every Child Matters
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Protection of Children Act 1999
- Special Guardianship Regulations 2005
- Private Fostering Regulations.

3 Definition and Principles of Family & Friends Care.

Definition:

A placement with a Connected Person can be defined as being an arrangement where:

- A child cannot live with their parents and is living away from the parental home with a relative or friend and
- The placement has in some way been assisted or initiated and or is supported by Children's Services and
- The child would otherwise be with foster carers, in residential care, independent living or adopted.

Principles:

Where a child cannot safely remain in the care of his/her parents, the local authority is required to intervene to protect the child but must also take any necessary steps to promote family life for the child.

The Children Act 1989 states that when a child comes into the care system either by agreement with parents or under a court order, the local authority must aim to reunite the child with the family.

A key principle of the Children Act 1989 is that children are best brought up within their families and, for the purposes of the Act; the term 'family' is to be understood broadly. The guidance underpinning the Act defines 'family' widely and includes relatives, friends and other significant people in a child's life.

Keeping children safe as close as possible to their family and social culture reduces the likelihood of placement breakdown, reduces the anxiety in children of having to live with strangers in an unfamiliar environment and often results in better outcomes for the child.

Section 23(1) to (6) of the Children Act 1989 places a duty on local authorities to ensure the placement of children with relatives or with people with whom they are familiar or connected, as an alternative to being looked after by strangers, and states: "unless it is not practicable or consistent with the child's welfare, the child must be placed with family and friends, near home and with any siblings who are also looked after by the local authority".

The Children Act affirms that the family life will vary according to culture, class, religion, and community and asserts the importance of

ethnicity, culture and language being significant factors in shaping decisions affecting children.

Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights, which is part of UK Law under the Human Rights Act 1998, requires public authorities to have respect for individuals and family life.

Children, parents, family members and family friends should be involved in decision making and planning about child placements as collaboratively as possible.

4 Regulation 24 Immediate Placement with Connected Person (Temporary Approvals)

The new Regulation 24 of the "Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) 2010 states that:-

" Where the responsible authority is satisfied that the most appropriate placement for child is with a connected person, notwithstanding that the connected person is not approved as a local authority foster parent, and it is necessary child to be placed with the connected person before the connected person's suitability to be a local authority foster parent has been assessed, they may approve that person as a local authority foster parent for a temporary period not exceeding 16 weeks ("temporary approval").

Before the child is placed the child's allocated social worker must:-

- Interview the proposed carer(s) in order to assess their suitability to care for the child including the suitability of the proposed accommodation.
- Interview all other persons aged 16 and over who are members of the household in which it is proposed that child will live taking into account all matters set out in Schedule 24 (specified offences).
- Ensure that the proposed carer and all members of the household aged 16 and above are checked with the Police Child Abuse Investigation Team, the family's GP and Children's Services records.
- consider whether, in all the circumstances and taking into account the services to be provided by the responsible authority, the proposed arrangements will safeguard and promote child's welfare and meet child's needs as set out in the care plan.
- **Make immediate** arrangements for the suitability of the connected person to be assessed as a local authority foster parent in accordance

with the 2011 Regulations ("*the full assessment process*") before the temporary approval expires".

- Ensure that prior to a child being placed with a connected person that the placement is the most suitable means to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

The proposed carer should be given information about the assessment process which will follow if the placement is to last longer than 16 weeks, including the need for CRB checks and other agency enquiries on all members of the household aged 16 and over, as well as interviews with referees, adult children and ex-partners, which will be part of any such fostering assessment.

The child's social worker must arrange for the carers to complete applications for Criminal Records Bureau checks then send the completed applications as soon as practicable to the Family and Friends Team for checks to be made as part of the assessment of the carers.

Each child over the age of three should have their own bedroom. If this is not possible, the sharing of a bedroom is agreed by each child's parent/carer/social worker and each child has their own area within the bedroom. In this situation, particular attention will need to be made about potential bullying, child's wishes, and history of abuse or abusive behaviour by undertaking a risk assessment.

The child's social worker must clearly explain the implications of taking on a **formal foster carer role** to prospective connected person and the child (subject to age and understanding). The child's introduction to the new fostering arrangement must take an account of the fact that, whilst the child may know the carer well, the carer's role in the child's life is now changing. The SW must ensure that this is explained to the child and the carer is provided with the support they need to manage this transition.

Subject to the successful completion of the assessment to temporarily approve a connected person the nominated LA's officer may approve the connected person as a LA foster carer for a period not exceeding 16 weeks. Temporary Approval Agreement form (appendix 2) will also need to be completed and signed by the child's social worker and the connected person(s) at the point of or prior to a child being placed.

In order to enable the nominated officer to have a full picture of the connected person's profile, a copy of a local police check will need to be attached with the assessment form when seeking approval.

The nominated officer can only sign/approve temporary approval of a connected person once they are in agreement with the plan to place the child with the connected person(s), has read and agreed with the contents of the temporary approval assessment, is provided with the copy of the fostering agreement form (appendix 3) as well as a copy of local police check(s).

According to the Regulations 2010 and 2011 it is deemed appropriate for the Fostering Service Agency Decision Maker to reserve the authority of granting temporary approvals. This is because granting of temporary approvals is an important decision as the LA will have responsibility for any children placed, but a full foster carer assessment will not have been undertaken and there will be no independent view from the fostering panel.

5 Referring cases to Family & Friends Team for full assessment

Referral to the Family & Friends Team should be made as early as **pre-proceedings** stage whereby the LA will be making considerations about family members and or other connected person as potential carer(s) for the child/children.

Discussion with the ATM for F&F Team may be appropriate at this stage for advice or guidance as to the most appropriate way to proceed. If a decision has been made to arrange a FGC it is imperative that an invite will also be sent to FF social worker.

In exceptional circumstances a request can be made to the F&F team for the temporary approval assessment's visit to be made but it should be acknowledged that the worker may not have full background knowledge to the case and this visit should in the first instance be undertaken by the worker with most knowledge of the child and his/her background and the circumstances surrounding his/her need for to be placed away from the birth parents.

All new referrals for full assessment requests by the F&F Team will be sent to the team via the Workload Allocation Meetings (WAM) that usually take place every Monday. In order to comply with the Regulation 2010-Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (CPPCR) for temporary approvals; referrals to the FF team will need to be made **within 2 working days of the child being placed**. This is essentially important because the regulations require the LA to complete the full assessment process within 16 weeks of a child being placed.

The referral paperwork to the Family & Friends team must include a completed and typed temporary approval assessment form signed by the child's social worker, their line manager and the nominated officer giving their approval for the placement. Furthermore a copy of temporary

assessment agreement (completed by the child's SW, signed by the connected person) and local police check will also be needed at this stage.

Completed Temporary approval assessment will be presented to Family and Friends Foster panel as part of the final assessment. It should therefore contain as much information as is available about the background to the placement, the child's needs and the parents and extended families understanding about the reasons for the placement. It is not simply a checklist but should inform the social worker's overall assessment of the connected person and should therefore convey any areas of concern or issues that need further consideration.

Completed temporary approval assessment form should also include permission for checks and should be signed by the connected person(s) (appendix 4).

6 Allocation of new cases to a Family & Family assessing social worker

The ATM for F&F Team will be responsible for allocating all new cases to the Team. These cases will be allocated to the assessing FF social worker within 48 hours of WAM meeting. The FF ATM will notify either by email or telephone the relevant line manager and or the child's social worker of the name of the FF SW undertaking the assessment role.

7 Assessment planning meeting

An **assessment-planning meeting** will be organised by the FF team and held before or no later than 10 working days from the date of case allocation to the FF Team. The purpose of this meeting will be to gather further information and set timescales in relation to any legal procedures and permanency planning for the child. This meeting will be attended by the FF assessing social worker, the child's social worker and their respective line managers if deemed necessary.

The FF Team Manager and ATM should be kept informed, by the Joint Legal Team and the children's team, regarding any reports required from the team for Court with the relevant filing dates.

Following the assessment planning meeting it is the responsibility of the Family and Friends Social Worker to book panel dates with the Family and Friends Panel Administrator.

Further date for a midway meeting prior to panel should be agreed at this meeting in order to share assessment progress.

Consideration should be given at this meeting to the matching requirements of the placement; the Child's needs and how these will be met by the connected person, any risk assessments, support issues, the strengths and vulnerabilities of the placement should also be considered. Contact should be clearly addressed as this is known to be an area, which significantly challenges placements when not well managed.

8 Placement support during assessment process

The allocated assessing FF social worker will also have the role of supporting the placement during the assessment process. This worker will assist the carer in managing the tasks associated with their new role. The worker will also be responsible in advising the connected person of relevant training and encourage attendance as appropriate.

If a placement has been approved under Regulation 24 the connected person will be entitled to a **half of current fostering allowance in accordance with the age of the child**. This is a non means tested allowance. It should be noted that once the connected person has had a full assessment and subsequently approved as foster carer for the specific child; full fostering allowance in accordance to the age of the child will be paid. Furthermore, the approved carer will also be entitled to the remaining other half of the allowance backdated to the date of temporary approval.

The FF assessing social worker should obtain the carer's bank details so that weekly allowance can be paid to them.

Initial support to the prospective carers might also include accessing support of Sect 17 Children Act 1989 funds.

Other support might include provision of equipment for the child e.g. bed, wall robe, bedding etc which will be identified at the time of the full assessment process.

9 Midway meeting/update

Midway meeting can be convened as soon as the full assessment process has begun and not necessarily half way through the process. This is important especially in the situations whereby the assessing social worker is concerned about specific issues relating to the placement and does not feel at that stage that they would be able to recommend approval. These meetings would normally involve the child's social worker and the assessing social worker only. However, in the case of complex cases; the FF social worker can request the support of their line manager as well as the child's social worker's line manager to be present at the meeting. It will be the responsibility of the FF Team to document on RAISE the outcome of the midway meeting.

10 The assessment process

The assessment and approval process for connected person(s) who apply to be foster carers for a specific looked after child must include the following:-

- Information about the prospective foster carer and other members of their household and family.
- In cases where a prospective foster carer has previously been in a relationship where they have shared the care of a child/young person consideration should be given to interviewing previous partners. This requires sensitivity and careful judgment. In the event that permission to contact is not given the reasons for this should be explored and documented. In some cases it may be appropriate to identify a significant person who knew the applicant during the previous relationship.
- In cases whereby the prospective foster carer is in a relationship regardless of whether they live together or not, the assessment of the prospective foster carers will have to include their partner.
- A full financial assessment will also be undertaken as part of this process.
- The assessing FF social worker must interview at least two persons nominated by the prospective foster carer to provide personal references and prepare written reports of the interviews.
- Assessment process must consider the applicant's suitability, their parenting capacity and motivation to care for the specific looked after child before approval as LA foster carer. Assessment of the household should also be addressed and its suitability for any child.
- The assessment should focus on the experience and strengths that the prospective foster carer has and the support that they will need to enable them to provide safe care for the specific looked after child.
- The assessment will need to balance the strengths of the carer arising from their position within the family network against any aspects which may make them less suitable. The needs of the child should be kept central to the assessment process as this will also be a matching process of the child to the carer.
- In cases whereby the prospective foster carer has been convicted of an offence (including specified offences) committed at the age of 18 or over or has been cautioned by the police, the assessment process

may continue if the Agency Decision Maker is satisfied that it is in the child's best interest to be cared for by the prospective carer. This could also be the case in situations whereby the prospective foster carers is already acting as a carer for the child.

- The assessment process will need to address carefully the carer's ability to manage contact arrangements as outlined in the child's care plan, and any support which the LA needs to provide to enable this.
- The assessing FF social worker must discuss the priorities of placement with the child concerned and take account of their wishes and feelings. A good understanding of the child's priorities for placement, needs, wishes and feelings will provide a sound basis for exercising professional judgement and decision making.
- The health of the prospective foster carer will be an important factor to consider in deciding whether they are suitable to be approved or not. Age is also another factor that will need to be explored i.e. significantly older than the average for parents bringing up their own children.
- Diversity - covering more than issues of race and ethnicity. The assessment should include the prospective carers' demonstration of flexible, inclusive and open perspective towards diversity.
- It must be noted that the above list is not a definitive list but merely giving the reader a sample of areas that will be covered as part of the assessment process. The Full Assessment of a Connected Person Form (appendix 5) will have all the dimensions for the assessment process.

11 Projected FF Foster Panel date (include ADM /HOS approval feedback)

The completed full assessment of a connected person will be presented to the FF foster panel within 12 weeks of a placement approval under Regulation 24. This assessment will be presented to the panel together with the following reports/assessments:-

- Temporary approval assessment
- Child's report (5 ECM Outcomes)
- Updates on/from CRB checks
- Updates on carers' medicals. Where permanency is being considered - face-to-face medicals should be sought in good time and reports sent to the Agency Medical Advisor/ Community Paediatrician.
- Three referees' reports will be completed by the FF assessing SW. 2 referees will be interviewed face-to-face. A third referee will be considered if appropriate, either face to face or telephone interview.

These references are confidential but will be included in the papers to panel.

- Safer Care Agreement
- H&S checks
- Pet assessments
- For a full list of requirements for panel and approval see table of requirements (Appendix P)

It is expected that both child's social worker and the FF assessing social worker will attend the panel to seek recommendation for approval of a connected person as foster carer. The connected person(s) will also be required to attend the panel.

The FF foster panel will make recommendations for approval/not approving the connected person to the Agency Decision Maker who will have the final decision. Once the Agency Decision Maker has agreed/not agreed with the FF foster panel recommendation; the connected person will be notified in writing of this fact within 10 working days and of any terms of the approval. For family and friends foster carer, the terms of approval will specify they are approved only for specific named child/children.

All foster carers, including those who have been temporarily approved under the 2010 Regulation, must also enter into a foster care agreement covering the matters set out in Schedule 5 of the 2011 Regulations.

The FF assessing social worker will also be responsible in ensuring that the referring children's team is notified of the outcome of the Agency Decision Maker following the panel. It cannot be assumed that once the panel has made recommendation for approval the ADM will follow suit.

It is therefore imperative in the cases whereby a child is yet to be placed; the placement should not go ahead until the ADM outcome is known. In the situation whereby a child is already placed; the ADM's outcome not to approve the connected person could mean the termination of the placement for the child and every effort will need to be made by the child's social worker to secure an alternative placement for the child as soon as possible.

12 Assessing FF SW involvement post panel

It is very likely that the assessing FF social worker will assume the role of supervising social worker for the connected person post approval. However, in certain circumstances another social worker within the team can be assigned the SSW' role post approval.

13 Placement support post panel/approval

Following approval a connected person will be allocated a supervising social worker who will visit every four weeks as a minimum. The supervising social worker will be available to support the placement. A duty worker for the FF Team will also be available during office hours where carer(s) can contact a member of the team if their supervising social worker is not available.

A Family and Friends support group runs fortnightly and is available to all carer(s). During this group workshops of interest to carer(s) are available on a regular basis. Evening workshops will be run according to demand for carer(s) who are not available during the day.

Carer(s) can access other training through the team either formally or on an individual basis according to need.

Approved connected person (carer) will receive a basic fostering allowance. The allowance is related to the age of the child and is paid fortnightly into the carer(s) bank account. This allowance will be set up by the supervising social worker once the carer(s) has been approved by the Agency Decision Maker.

Other financial support may include help with purchasing equipment and one off 'settling in' payment for the care of a child. These are discretionary and will need to be considered by the Service Manager for Family Placements. The supervising social worker should discuss with the Team Manager for Family & Friends and provide a written outline of the needs and the financial costs involved. It may also be necessary at this stage to obtain a financial breakdown from the carer(s). This will then be presented to the Service Manager for a final decision.

All approved family and friends foster carers will be enabled and supported to work towards an amended set of standards (Training, Support and Development; TSD). Additional time will also be provided in order to demonstrate achievement of the Standards i.e. 18 months from approval date.

14 Reviews

- Approvals for all Family & Friends Foster Carers will be reviewed six months after full approval has been given and annually thereafter. A review (see Appendix 7) should also be held where the carers' circumstances change or where there are concerns raised in relation to the suitability of the carer or his/her household. In addition a review should be held where there are complaints made against the carer.

- The review will be carried out by a worker from the Family & Friends team. In exceptional circumstances the review can be carried out by the ATM.
- Reviews carried out after 6 months will be presented to the Family & Friends panel and a recommendation made as to the continued suitability of the approval. Reviews at 12 months and after should be sent to the Panel Chair for advice and/or recommendation, unless there are **significant issues** or changes to the carers or household, which should be discussed with the Team Manager for the Family & Friends Team, and a decision made as to whether presentation at the Panel would be more appropriate.
- Significant issues include the following:
 - Change of composition of the family due to health/death etc;
 - Change of address where this raises issues for contact etc;
 - Divorce or re-marriage of the carers;
 - Additions to the household – either adult or children;
 - On occasions when change of circumstances for the birth parents significantly impact on the Family & Friends placement.
- Reviews will focus on the carer continued capacity to meet the needs of the specific child. The child's views will be gathered as part of the reviewing process. Carer(s) will be asked for their views and an update report from the child (ren)'s Social Worker (Appendix 8) will be requested.
- Medicals will be carried out on a two yearly basis, unless otherwise specified by the Agency Medical Adviser. Police and CRB checks will also be updated every three years where appropriate.

15 Special Guardianship, Residence Orders and Adoption

See separate procedures for Special Guardianship Orders, Residence Orders and Adoption.

16 Complaints

- Where prospective foster carers are not happy about a decision made in relation to their assessment they should, in the first instance, be encouraged to discuss this with the worker undertaking the assessment. When it is not possible or it is deemed inappropriate to do so the Assistant Team Manager should be called in to discuss the issues and attempt to resolve the difficulties.

- Wherever dissatisfaction in relation to the service is expressed attempts to resolve the issues through discussion should be made. This could be through the Team Manager for the Family & Friends Team or through the Team Manager for the child's Social Worker;
- Both prospective and approved carer(s) will be provided with information in relation to the council's Complaints Procedure and will be encouraged to follow this process when disputes cannot be resolved.

Christine Johnson; ATM FF Team Aug 2011

Valid for 72hrs from date of printing

Child in need of **immediate** placement. Child's SW to identify potential family member, friend or other connected person(s) who could care for the child.



Child's SW and ATM/TM to have a discussion with Service Manager about potential Reg. 24 placement for decision in principle.

Inform Family and Friends Team of Reg. 24 placement



It is imperative that the child's SW ensures that local police checks are undertaken prior to a child being placed for all household members over the age of 16. RAISE checks should also be undertaken if family member/friend living within the area.

A local police check is not the full CRB, so this must also be completed during the assessment.



Child's SW to undertake home visit(s) to assess the suitability of the connected person to care for the child including:-

- Home environment is safe.
- The accommodation is suitable for the child alongside all the people resident in the home.
- Their relationship with the child
- Their physical, emotional and mental health.
- Their family history and relationships.
- Their capacity to care for children and for the particular child.
- Any criminal records.
- Share Reg. 24 assessment & temporary approval agreement with the carers to ensure they understand their responsibilities and expectations of the LA. Once shared, a signed copy must be obtained.

Child can be placed at this point.

Child needs to be placed with Placement Information Record and all Medical consent forms.



Temporary Approval Assessment and agreement signed by carers to be forwarded a nominated officer (HOS)/ Service Manager to agreed and authorised as a matter of urgency. Child should not be placed without this authorisation, LA checks and Local Police Checks.



Completed & signed Reg. 24 assessment to be forwarded to FF Team via WAM/within 2 working days of a child being placed.

Process for Full Assessment, expectations and responsibilities of Children's Team are covered in the "Family and Friends Policy".

Aug 2011 Temporary Approval (Reg.24) Assessment of Family and Friends carers (Connected Person) for Reading Borough Council

Temporary Approval Assessment can only be undertaken if the LA is satisfied that the proposed placement is the most appropriate for the child and that it is not possible to fulfil all the fostering requirements of the 2011 Regulations in approving the identified family and friend carer (connected person) as a LA foster carer before placing the child. As with any other placement the placing social worker must be satisfied that the placement is the most suitable means to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

*Temporary Approval Assessment is intended to be used exceptionally, where the connected person is **already known to the child**, to avoid an unnecessary move to a stranger foster carer, and in "circumstances which could not easily have been foreseen".*

This document will be part of the report put before the Family and Friends panel therefore it should be typed. Please ensure that the report provides a good understanding of the child's needs and the prospective carer's capacity to meet those needs as well as the background to the proposed placement.

An assessment of family and friends (connected person) as carer for:

..... child/ren's name.

SECTION 1 - THE CHILD/REN

1. Details of child/ren for whom the applicant(s) is/are being assessed

Details	Child one	Child two
Full name (including other known/used names)		
Current placement		
Name of carer		
Current address		
Local Authority Area		
Date of birth		
Place of birth		
Gender		

Ethnicity		
Religion		
Languages		
Nationality & Immigration status <i>(if appropriate)</i>		
Special needs requirements		
Name of Mother		
Name of Father		
Does birth father hold parental responsibility?		
School Name/Address & Year		
Legal status		

SECTION 2 - THE APPLICANTS

1. Details of Applicant(s) - to be completed by the Social Worker

Details	Applicant one	Applicant two
Surname		
Previous names		
Forenames		
Date of birth		
Ethnicity		
Language		
Religion		
Occupation		
Current/proposed hours of work		
Address		
Contact numbers Home: Work: Mobile:		

Applicant's relationship to child(ren)		

2. Who else lives in the household?

Children, adult children & other adults in the Applicant's Household.	Gender	D.o.b	Ethnicity	Relationship to applicant	Relationship to child(ren)	School attended Including address & postcode.

3. Are there children (including adult children) from current or previous partnership living elsewhere or deceased?

Full name	Gender	D.o.b	Ethnicity	Whereabouts or date and cause of death	Relationship to applicant	Relationship to child(ren)

4. Are there other adults (not in the household) who may have responsibility on a regular basis for the care of any child/ren placed?

Full name	Gender	D.o.b	Ethnicity	Relationship to applicant	Relationship to child(ren)

5. Other Children/Adults who visit the home on a regular basis:

Name	Gender	D.o.b	Ethnicity	Relationship to applicant	Relationship to child(ren)

6. CRB checks will need to be completed for anyone over the age of 16 years who will be having regular contact with the child(ren). Please tick below to confirm if CRB forms have been completed or not:

Yes:.....

No:.....

7. Please comment on any other relevant information that you have checked/found on RAISE, paperfile(s), other LA's checks, probation services etc regarding the applicant(s)

8. About the Applicant's house and community

(Pls note a Health and Safety check will need to be completed by Family and Friends)

Are mortgage/rental payments up to date?	
Is there a tenancy agreement? If yes who with?	
Number of bedrooms	
Will the child have his/her own room? If not please give details of arrangements.	
Is there a garden?	
Are there any pets?	

Where are the local parks/ leisure facilities?	
Where is the nearest place of worship For the child(ren)?	
What transport arrangements are there?	
Diversity of the population?	

9. Pre Court Involvement and Assessments

Have you been involved in any previous Family Court Proceedings?
No
Yes
Please give details including outcomes of the Proceedings:
Have you previously been assessed as prospective carers for any children?
No
Yes
Please list giving outcomes of assessments.

SECTION 3 - MEETING THE CHILD/REN'S NEEDS

1. Assessment of Child's Needs (core assessment can be attached here)
 Please include; child's physical description and personality, health, education, emotional, behavioural development, identity, family & social relationships, social presentation, self care skills.

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2. Reasons for proposed placement: why is the child unable to live with birth parent(s) currently, what are the identified risks, what is required from the proposed carer to keep the child safe from identified risks? What type of family does the child need?

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3. Child(ren)'s wishes and feelings.

(What are the child's wishes and feelings in relation to proposed placement, contact plans, his/her religious and cultural upbringing).

Please include dates when the child was spoken to. Describe the child's relationship with the carers and what has been done to prepare the child for the placement.

4. The Applicant(s)

(Description of the applicant(s) and their personality; marital status, identity including applicant's attitudes to and experiences of diversity, health, education, employment and recreational interests.

5. The applicant(s)' capacity to parent the child

(Describe the applicants ability to provide stable family environment which will promote attachment for the child/ren; describe the applicant's previous experience of caring for children, how the applicant relates to adults and children.

6. The applicant(s)' capacity to meet the child's basic care needs.

(Describe the applicant's capacity to ensure the child's safety; meeting the child's physical needs and ensuring appropriate medical and dental care; providing stimulating, learning and development environment for the child; manage child's behaviour without the use of physical chastisement or other inappropriate methods; provide evidence to show that the applicant can offer emotional warmth to the child; evidence that the applicant will value the child's identity and take into account their wishes and feelings

7. The applicant(s)' capacity to manage contact and promote child's positive image.

(Applicant's ability to promote positive contact, where appropriate describe the relationship of the applicants with the child's parents; ability to promote the child's self care skills and social presentation.)

8. The applicant's understanding of why the child(ren) is/ are in need of placement

(consider the following; what is the motivation for taking on the child, what are the able to offer the child, what is the length of time they are willing to invest in caring for the child, are all the applicant's family in agreement, if not what can be offered to support them?)

9. Do you have any significant health issues you wish to share?

This will help determine the level of medical advice needed to seek your approval as a Family and friends Foster Carer and help identify as soon as possible any support needs you may have. You may supply this confidentially on a separate piece of paper.

10. Social Workers assessment/ analysis of information gathered as part of this assessment including recommendation for Regulation 24 placement and /or full fostering assessment of Family and friends carer(connected person):

	Applicant One	Applicant Two
Known Health issues/needs		
Smoker/Non Smoker		

11. Views of Social Worker with consideration to placement in the Short term, medium and long term placement including any issues to be addressed in the full fostering assessment and any support needs of the family.

12. Personal References

Applicants will require three personal referees, **only one** of which can be a family member. Two of these need to be visited by the Family and Friends Team and reports written regarding what they have said.

Referee one	Referee two	Referee three
Name and address/ Contact telephone Numbers	Name and address Contact telephone Numbers	Name and address Contact telephone Numbers
Relationship to applicant	Relationship to applicant	Relationship to applicant
	Applicant One	Applicant Two
GP Name		
Address & Tel no		

SECTION 4 - OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

1. Record of checks:

	Applicant one		Applicant two		Other relevant adults over 16 yrs	
Agency	Date requested	Date received	Date requested	Date received	Date requested	Date received
Local Police Check (Reg. 24)						
LA's files/RAISE						
CRB						
GP						
RBC						
NSPCC						
Child health						
Other LA if necessary						
3 personal references						
Employers reference						

*Do you have any current/previous criminal convictions you would like to declare;

Name	Conviction	Details

Signed Applicant One

.....

Name:.....

Date.....

Signed: Child's S.W

Signed Applicant Two

.....

Name:.....

Date.....

Signed: Line Manager/Manager

.....

.....

Name:.....

Name:.....

Date:.....

Date:.....

Temporary Approvals for prospective family and friends (connected person) foster carers can only be granted by a nominated officer (HOS) or other senior manager delegated by the HOS. Prior to a child being placed under the Temporary Approval status, **the placing social worker must ensure that the assessment is approved & signed by the nominated officer.**

Once signed by applicant(s), social worker, SW's manager and the nominated officer, completed Temporary Approval Assessment should be referred to the FF Team **within 2 working days of the child being placed** so as to avoid delay in starting a Full Fostering Assessment. Referrals can be made by emailing ATM/TM of FF Team and subsequent case transfer via Workload Allocations Meeting (WAM).

TEMPORARY APPROVAL

<p>I approve the above applicant(s) as foster carer(s) for a temporary period not exceeding 16 weeks in compliance with Regulation 24 of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010.</p> <p>Name of the Nominated Officer (HOS).....</p> <p>Signature.....</p> <p>Date.....</p>

TEMPORARY APPROVAL PERIOD

Date temporary foster placement started	
Date temporary foster placement ends (16 weeks later)	

It is essential that evidence of local police checks are included as part of Temporary Approval Assessment.



Anna Wright
Director of Education and Children's Services
Placement Choice & Stability
2-4 Darwin Close, Reading, RG2 0TB
Tel No: (0118) 939 0900
Direct Tel No: (0118) 37 3740
Fax: (0118) 955 3746

Our Ref:
Date:

Your contact is: **Team Manager FF/Fostering Services**

To: The Team Manager • Fostering/ Family & Friends Team •
Reading Borough Council • 2-4 Darwin Close, Reading, RG2 0TB
Telephone: (0118) 937 3740 • Facsimile: (0118) 955 3746

* I/we understand that in connection with my/our application to adopt/foster, the Local Authority has to make enquiries of the Criminal Records Bureau, Local Authority, Health Services, Education, Employment and NSPCC as is necessary. I/we agree to any relevant information being disclosed for this purpose.

* I/we do/do not wish to see the reference from our GP, which is available to us by right of the Access to Medical Records Act 1988.

* Delete as appropriate.

Applicant 1

Print Name:

Signed:

Applicant 2

Print Name:

Signed:

	Applicant One	Applicant Two
GP Name		
Address & Tel no		

! Important: Please ensure this consent document remains on one page only

TEMPORARY APPROVAL AGREEMENT (REG. 24)

Agreement between Reading Borough Council Children's Services
Department and Temporary Approved foster carer(s) (Regulation 24 Carers)

Re:.....
Name of child

DOB.....

I/We..... (Carers name)

Of.....
.....
(address)

Agree as follows: -

1. To care for the child as if s/he were the member of the family
2. To sign agreements to checks and Police, Health, LA and Education references on all persons over 16 years who live in or have regular and substantive contact with the household.
3. To allow a local authority officer to visit at any time.
4. To give written notice to the Reading Borough Council forthwith, with full particulars of:-
 - a) Any intended change of their address
 - b) Any change in the composition of their household
 - c) Any other change in their personal circumstances and any other event affecting their capacity to care for any child placed or the suitability of their household.
5. Not to administer corporal punishment to any child placed with them.
6. To ensure that any information relating to a child placed with them to the child's family or to any other person, which has been given in confidence in connection with a placement is kept confidential and is not disclosed to any person without the consent of the responsible authority.
7. To comply with Court Orders and or/the local authority's requirements about contact.
8. To permit the child to be removed at any time if the local authority decides it is no longer a suitable placement.

Signed (Regulation 24 carers).....

Name:Date

FAMILY, FRIENDS & CONNECTED PERSON(S) ASSESSMENT

Section 1 : The Carer/s

Carer's History
<p>Detailed account of the carer/s' childhood, background, relationship with family including parents, siblings and their own children. Significance of culture, ethnicity, religion and language on upbringing. Attitude to/experience of physical disability and/or learning difficulty. Applicant's views and feelings towards own upbringing and family relationships. Education and employment history. Are there any areas of concern/ does anything need to be addressed by the carer/s? Are they able to reflect on their past experiences?</p>
<p><i>Valid for 72hrs from date</i></p>
<p>Worker's Analysis:</p>
<p><i>Valid for 72hrs from date</i></p>
Relationships/Partnerships
<p>Length of current relationship/partnership if any; what makes the relationship positive for each applicant?; how do they support each other (strengths, vulnerabilities); how do they cope with problems, stress, anger?; how are decisions made? How do applicants feel about this? Are others</p>

involved in decision-making? If so how?; Are both applicants in agreement with the placement? What are their views on how the placement may affect/has affected their relationship?; Outline significant past relationships – learning from these and impact on present relationship. Are there children from these relationships? Is there contact? What are their views on the placement?

Worker's Analysis:

Family Functioning and Impact of Placement

Please comment on what the family does for fun and the support networks in place. What stage of family development are the family at, how would these change if a child/ren are placed? If this is intended to be a long/short term placement, how will the carer/s continue to meet their own needs and manage the potential loss of leisure pursuits, friends, job and the needs of others in the family etc.

Working with Professionals
<p>Please comment on the carer/s ability to work with professionals, take on board advice and access support. Are there any area which the carer/s would need professional support in future? Please use evidence to support your account.</p>
Contact
<p>Please comment on the carer/s relationship with the parents of the child. How will contact be managed in future? Is any support needed with this? Do they</p>

understand the emotional impact contact may have on the child/ren? If reunification is a possibility comment on the applicant's attitude to any ability to promote this.

Valid for 72hrs from date of printing

Environmental Factors

Please comment if any practical changes are needed, for example housing, financial impact, employment, obtaining equipment and how will the carer/s manage this. Also the social integration of the carers and their access of community resources.

Blank area for text input.

Valuing Diversity

What is the family's attitude to any experience of discrimination – racial, religious, language, gender, sexual orientation etc. What is the applicant's experience of a multi cultural society? How is this reflected/demonstrated in their present lifestyle and care of the child(ren)? Does the applicant promote an anti-discriminatory approach to parenting and how is this demonstrated and perceived by other family members?

Blank area for text input.

Child Protection Issues

Have specific child protection issues been identified for the child/ren? If so highlight significant issues for the applicant/s in caring for child(ren). How can the applicant/s ensure that the child(ren) will be safe in their family and wider support network and how will they deal with any conflict of loyalties? If the child(ren) are known to have been abused do the applicants understand what has happened to the child(ren) and what implications does this have for their care of the child(ren)? If abuse is subsequently disclosed, how will the applicants deal with this, including any allegations/investigations of themselves?

Section 2: The Child/ren

When discussing the carer's capacity to meet the child's needs, include information relating to basic care, ensuring safety, emotional warmth, stimulation, guidance, boundaries and stability.

Description of the Child
How does the carer describe the child/ren, what do they like about them, what activities do they like to do together?
Family and Social Relationships
Carer's understanding of the Child's needs:
Carers' capacity to meet the child's needs:
Education
Carer's understanding of the Child's needs:
Carers' capacity to meet the child's needs:

Emotional and Behavioural Development
Carer's understanding of the Child's needs:
Carers' capacity to meet the child's needs (please include parenting style e.g. rewards, consequences for poor behaviour etc)
Identity
Carer's understanding of the Child's needs:
Carers' capacity to meet the child's needs:
Social Presentation
Carer's understanding of the Child's needs:

Carers' capacity to meet the child's needs:
Health
Carer's understanding of the Child's needs:
Carers' capacity to meet the child's needs:
Child/ren's view of the Placement
Consider how best to represent the Child/ Young person's views in this assessment. Examples have been letters, drawings, and observations.



Valid for 72hrs from date of printing

Section 3: Analysis and Conclusion

Analysis of the Placement
<p>Please consider how this placement would provide the best option for the child, any difficulties that may arise in future. How will the carer/s be able to meet the developmental needs of the child/ren? The parenting capacity of the carer/s including previous experience which would help them in the short and longterm. The family and environmental factors such as support network, impact of family relationships and practical changes that may be necessary. Outline Issues from the Medical Advisors report, any issues from other documents completed i.e. health and safety, safer care.</p>
Conclusion and Recommendations

Views of the Carer/s
<p>Including any areas of disagreement. Views on the support that carers feel they need to help them care for the child/ children. Anything in addition to this report they would like to add?</p>

Signed Applicant One

.....

Date.....

Signed Applicant Two

.....

Date.....

Signed Social Worker
Family and Friends Team

.....

Date.....

Signed Supervisor
Family and Friends Team

.....

Date.....

Valid for 72hrs from date of print