



NORTH
YORKSHIRE
COUNCIL



Permanency Strategy

2022 - 2025

Contents

Foreword	3
1.0 Introduction	4
2.0 Our Core principles	5
3.0 Our Objectives	6
4.0 Model of Practice	7
5.0 What to consider when a child cannot remain at home	8
6.0 Planning for permanency	12
7.0 Permanence and local placement	13
8.0 Options for permanency	13
Staying / Returning home	
Supported to live with Family or Friends/Connected Persons	
Long-Term fostering	
Early Permanence Placements	
Child Arrangement Orders	
Special Guardianship Orders	
Adoption	
9.0 Regional Adoption Agency (One Adoption North & Humber)	23
10.0 Appendix a: Care arrangements for children not living with parents	24

1. Foreword

As set out in our Being Young 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 'Children in Care 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 'Children in Care 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 come into care, 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 Services



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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stuart Carlton'.

1.0 Introduction

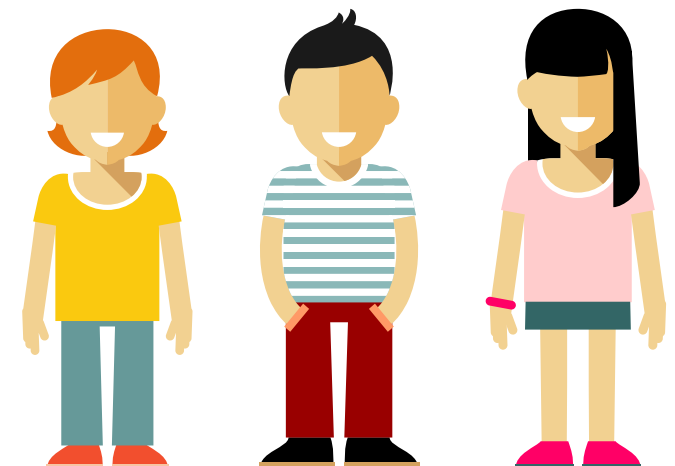
We are dedicated to supporting our Children in Care to live happy, healthy lives and achieve the best possible outcomes they can. This strategy has been developed to outline how we will achieve permanence for our children and young people.

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 3 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.

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

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

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 2 questions that we must keep at the core 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:

-  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.
-  Family members and friends should always be considered in the first instance.
-  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 Child Arrangement Orders, Special Guardian Orders, Long Term Fostering or Adoption.
-  If an older child wants to live independently, and the services thinks this could be suitable, then this may be considered.

4.0 How We Will Provide Support

Our Purpose

To support positive change that continues after we no longer need to be involved. We will create conditions that allow relationships to flourish. Our Practice system is built to deliver this outcome.

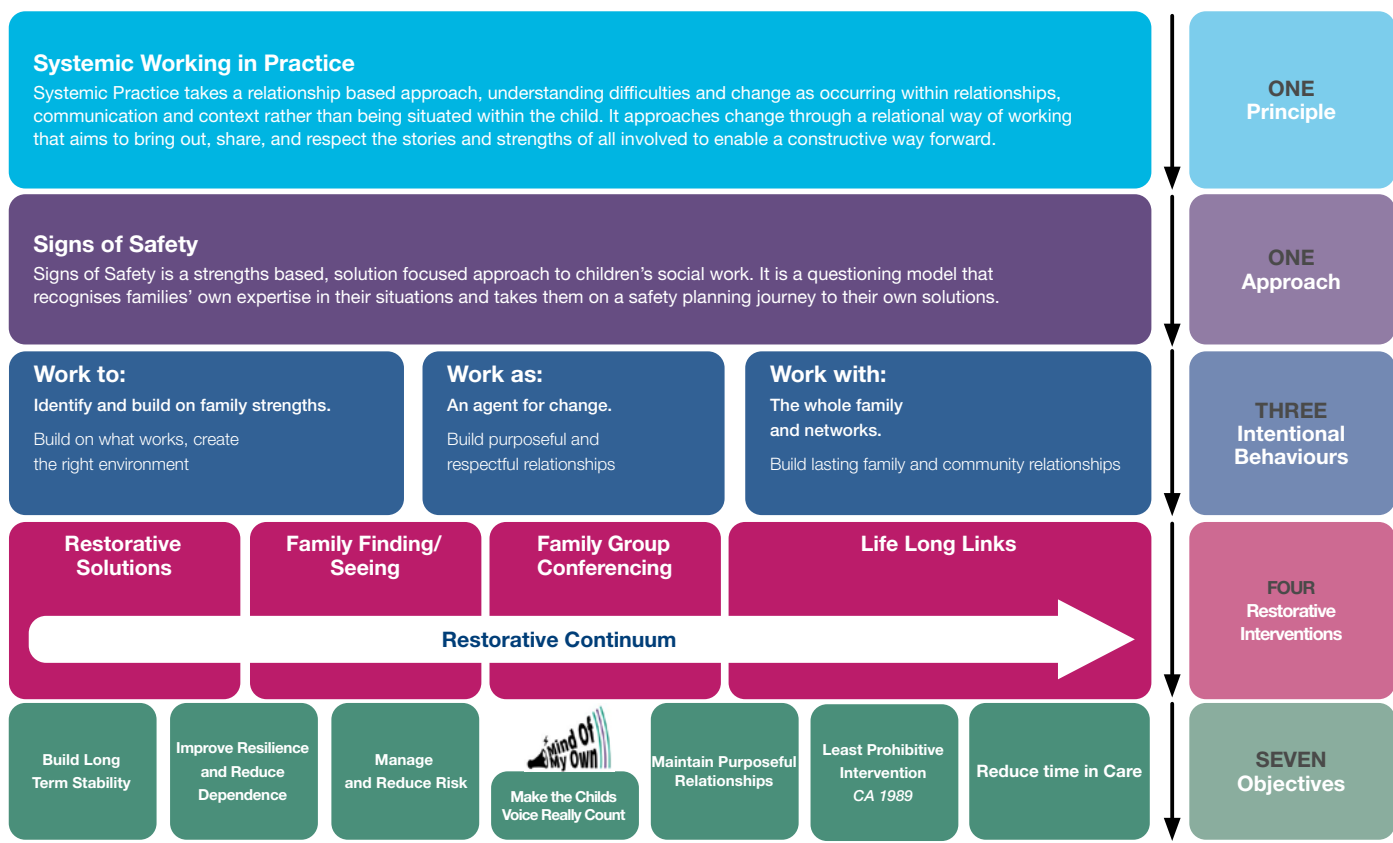
The diagram below lays out the model of practice we follow in North Yorkshire when providing the support children, young people and their families need to overcome challenging and difficult circumstances. We believe that stable relationships should be established between workers, children, young people and their families and networks, working alongside them and 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:



Our Purpose

To support positive change that continues after we no longer need to be involved. We will create conditions that allow relationships to flourish. Our Practice system is built to deliver this outcome.



© North Yorkshire County Council 2020
 The right of North Yorkshire County Council to be identified as the owner of the copyright in this work is asserted in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. All rights are reserved.
 No part of these works should be reproduced or transmitted in any form, or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) unless permitted by law or otherwise with the prior written consent of North Yorkshire County Council. These works are distributed subject to the condition that they shall not, by trade or otherwise, be lent, hired out, sold or otherwise circulated without North Yorkshire County Council's written consent unless otherwise permitted by law.

5.0 What to Consider When a Child Cannot Remain at Home

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

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.

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 and believe that the family hold the answer. We hope to support families at the earliest opportunity.

Family Group conferencing (FGC) is a child centred, family focused approach to help build support networks and relationships around the child and family. FGC helps bring together family members and other people who are important to the child to support them to find their own solutions to the difficulties that are causing the family and professionals to worry.

FGC is family led, together with the referrer they will agree what is causing concern and this will be the focus of the meeting (conference). A FGC coordinator will support the family and the network; they will also act as facilitator for the meeting (conference).

The facilitator will make sure that the views of the child and any other information is shared before leaving the family to have some private family time. It is during family time that they will together create a plan about what they will do that will help the family and address the worries and concerns. They will also look at what things they may need from others and the professionals to help make the plan work.

The network can come together again to review the plan to make any changes/ tweaks it might need so that it keeps working.

Family Group Conferencing, similar to Family finding puts the planning and decision making in the hands of the family.

When working well it can improve outcomes for children and families by;

- Supporting Families to plan and take control of their lives
- Putting the child at the heart of any decisions
- Giving the child a voice
- Supporting the sharing and agreeing of what the concerns are
- Helping clarify everyone's roles and responsibilities
- Identifying resources or any gaps in these
- Making sure everyone knows if there are any non – negotiables / bottom lines that couldn't be agreed.
- Focusing on solutions and strengths rather than problems
- Identifying the Best Permanency Option

Lifelong Connections

In North Yorkshire we know that having family and significant people in our life is very important. It is also important for the children and Young people that the Local Authority look after and those children who don't live with their parent(s).

Lifelong Connections (formally Lifelong Links) is an approach which seeks to assist children and young people in care to have a safe, lasting support network, helping them have a greater level of control and ongoing support in their lives.

We know that Young people often drift back to their birth families after care without support or planning.

Lifelong connections is about supporting those children and young people in a more timely manner to identify people they would like a relationship with, using tools to help the Young person to think about their life and who has been important but also those they may not have previously known who they might want a relationship with.

They will together with their lifelong connections coordinator look at how they get in touch with the identified people and at how any introductions and meetings will take place. They will work together to ensure that this is done safely and at the YP's pace. The YP and worker will build a booklet of all the work done together.

The hope is Lifelong Connections will lead to:

- Building a stronger sense of identity
- Improve emotional wellbeing
- Stronger relationships in care and when young people leave care
- Greater placement stability

Inspiration for Change

Inspiration for change works with birth parents who no longer have the care of their child/ren.

Our aim is to work intensely with parents who have had a child/ren permanently removed from their care to support them to make changes which hopefully will reduce the chances of further pregnancies leading to future care proceedings.

We also support the parents to ensure that they have the best relationship they can with their child/ren. This could be supporting them to have quality face to face time with their children, letterbox contact, helping them play a part of creating any life story book/ information for their children.

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.

Keeping in touch with the child's network

It's really important to recognise that children have their own networks which will predominantly be made up of their family and friends but might also include others like sports coaches, pets or their friend's parents.

When it is in the child's best interests it is important that children remain connected to their network in as natural a way as possible. This will help to maintain their identity, give reassurance, provide an on-going source of information and will minimise the sense of loss which will assist adopters if the permanency plan for the child is adoption. Research also shows that the more connected a child is to their network, the more successful and stable a placement with alternative carers is.

Whilst we know that direct face to face time together is the best way to keep connected, technology has provided different options including video calls, text messages, social media and messaging apps like WhatsApp.

Direct face to face time together work's best when everyone can agree on the plan for permanence and when parents are supported to understand the decisions made about their children needing alternate carers.

It's also best when everyone recognises the child's network and the importance of the child keeping in touch with the people and pets that are important to them and that the network is empowered to help make sure it happens. It also works best when children are able to keep in touch with the people that are important to them in the same ways everyone else does, like visiting the park or going to the cinema, rather than sitting in a centre with a "supervisor". Having fun and having things to do together makes for really good memories and will lead to less dysregulation following the event.

Direct face to face time can be difficult if there are disagreements about the best plan for permanence or where parents don't accept that their child needs alternate carers. It can also be negative if people let the child down when there is a plan to meet up or have a call.

The child's views should be considered when making, reviewing, progressing or restricting time together.





Keeping in touch indirectly

It might not always be possible to keep in touch with everyone face to face or it might be that in between face to face time together there are supplementary telephone calls, emails or video calls.

It's really crucial that everyone in the child's network recognises the importance of keeping in touch. Everyone that loves or cares about a child should be involved in the making and reviewing of arrangements and should always have the child's best interests at the heart of any decisions made.

Direct keeping in touch will work most effectively if all parties agreed 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 child in care 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 a child in care and will chair their Children in Care Reviews; the initial review will be within 20 working days of becoming a child in care 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.

The Mockingbird Family Model

The Mockingbird Family Model Constellation consist of a Hub Home Foster Carer and six to eight Satellite Foster Homes. The Hub Home does not have any children living with them long term and has two bedrooms available for planned and emergency Sleepovers.

To normalise the experience, the Mockingbird model utilise the term Sleepovers instead of Respite. All Sleepovers are arranged by the Foster Carers within the Mockingbird partnership, with ultimate oversight by the Hub Home Foster Carer.

6.0 Planning for Permanency

At the core of everything we do is the question “How the child’s permanence are needs being met?” and 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. 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

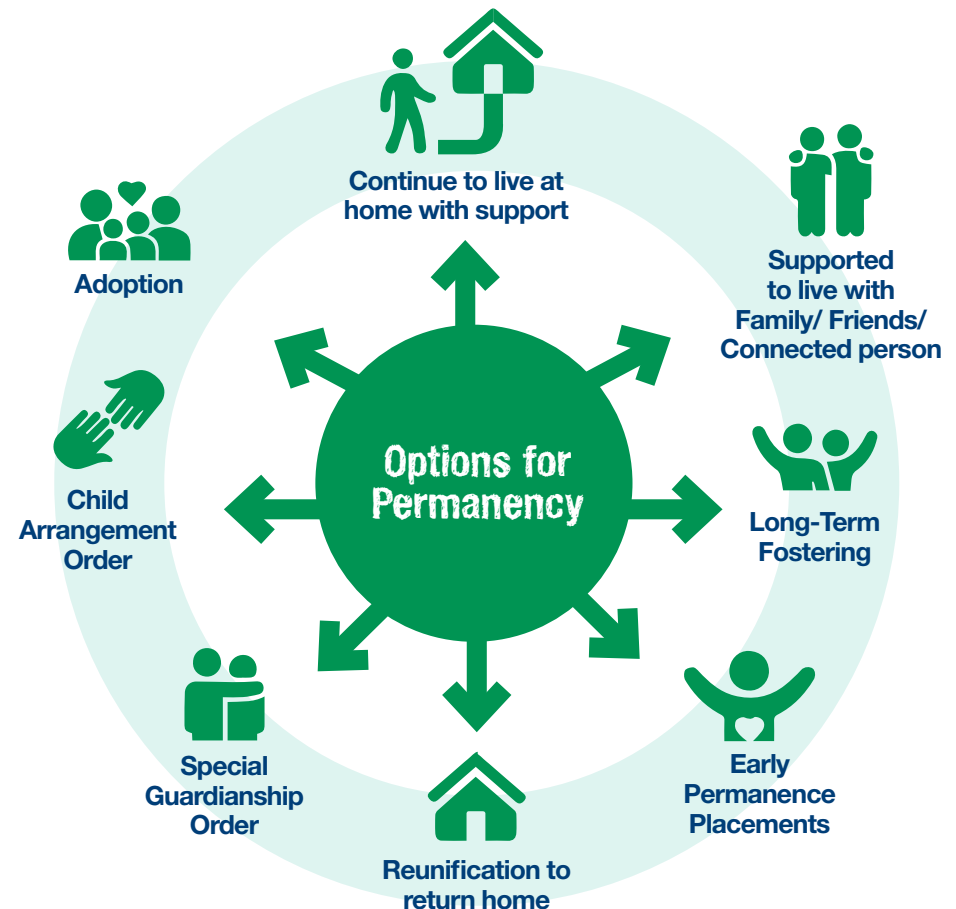
Where a placement is with long-term carers, it is important the child has access to the friends, family or community within which they were brought up. Enabling ongoing contact with birth their family will remain a priority.

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 Child in Care Review, we will take the opportunity to discuss with the child, carers, social worker and Independent Reviewing Officer to consider whether a return home or back to the family network is appropriate. 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:



Continue to live at home with support and Reunification to return 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.

Research has shown that supporting the family to stay together has a higher success rate for the outcomes for children, this must be balanced against the risk of harm to the child and what the child wants.

What this means

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

Other considerations

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

What this means

- The Local Authority retains a role in negotiation between foster carers and their birth family for example spending time with the family.
- 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 that the Local Authority can support these arrangements. For example Child Order Arrangement or a Special Guardianship Order.



Long-Term Fostering

For children who are in long-term foster care, this provides an important route to permanence and ensuring stability.

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.

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.

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

- Where there is a care order the local authority will share parental responsibility with the parent and fulfil their corporate parenting duties. 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.
- Parental responsibility is held exclusively by the carers/adopters.
- Child centred, taking the challenges and risks away from the child and instead places them with the adults.
- Parental responsibility is shared between the matched adopter, Local Authority and parent. Once the Adoption Order has been granted the legal parental responsibility lies with the adoptive parent/s.

Other considerations

- Early Permanence Placements are only suitable for a small number of children.
- Foster carer is required to support the child to see the family up to the adoption order is granted, consider arrangements for the birth family to have contact through the post box arrangement. There after arrangements will be made between future birth family and adoptive family.



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 more 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:

- 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.

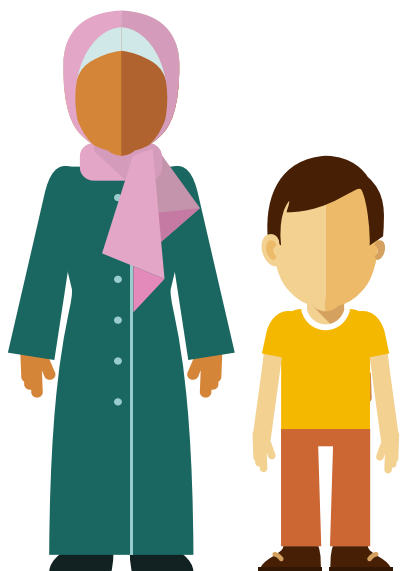
Special Guardianship Orders offer stability, whilst they can be revoked, there are restrictions on those who may apply to discharge the Order. The leave of the Court, if required, will only be granted where circumstances have changed since the Special Guardianship Order was made.

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 special guardian will 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.
- Although there are restrictions on applications to discharge the order. Applications made by birth parents are possible this may undermine the stability of the Special Guardianship Order.
- Although a parent requires leave (permission of the court) to apply for a Child Arrangements Order, they may be able to apply for a Prohibited Steps Order or Specific Issues Order without leave.

Adoption

Adoption legally transfers parental responsibility for the child permanently to the adopter(s). 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 support 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

- If a child has previously been in the care of another local authority and placed for adoption within North Yorkshire, it is the responsibility of the other local authority for 3 years post adoption.
- Parental responsibility is held exclusively by the carers.
- The child is no longer Looked After.
- An adoption order is usually final and life-long and can only be set aside in very limited circumstances.
- The child is a permanent family member into adulthood.
- Any decisions about continuing contact and change are usually made by the adoptive parents (on the child's behalf). This can be made into a 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.

The 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.

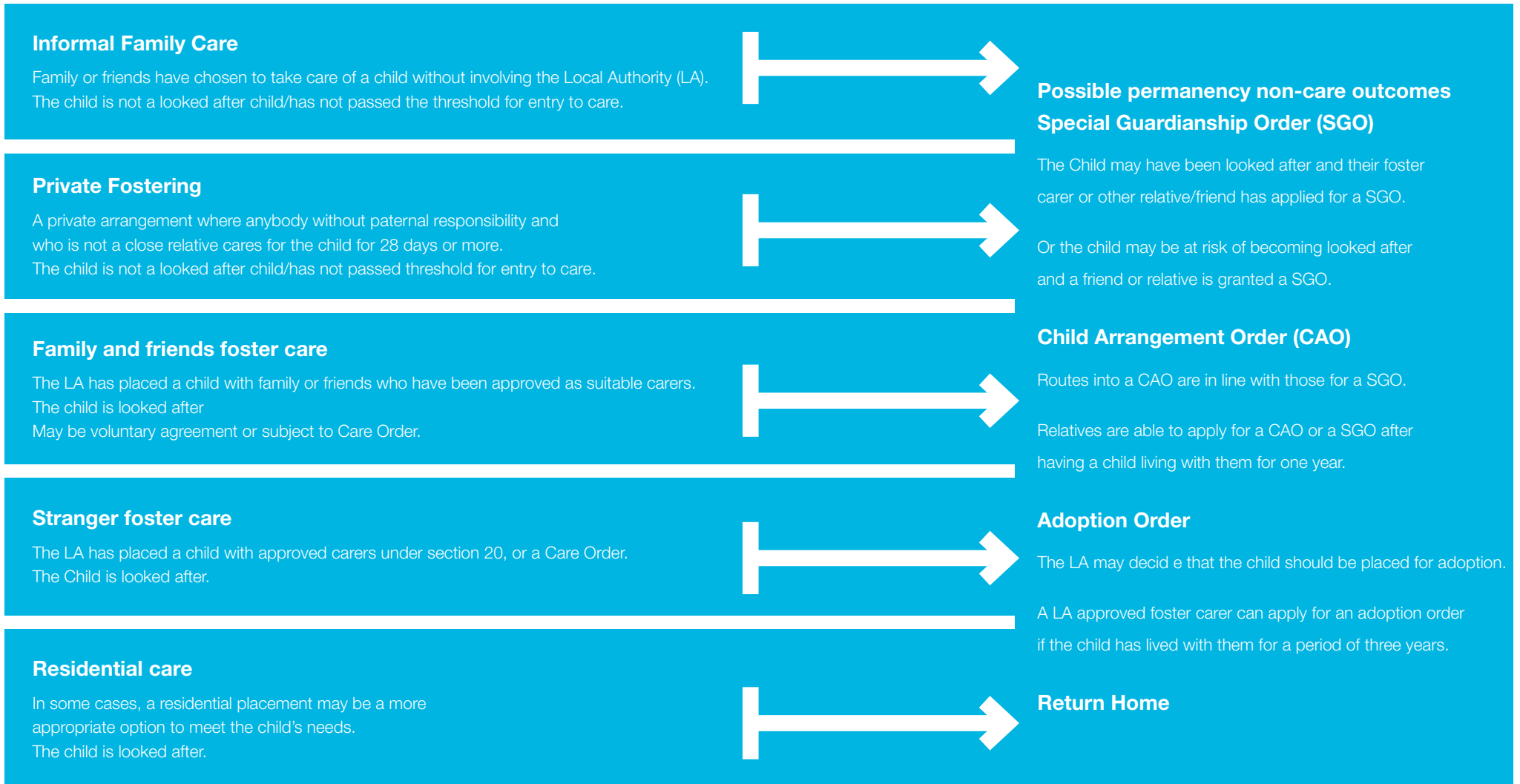
By being able to access a larger pool of adopters from across the region when matching a child, it is likely to improve the quality of the match and speed up the process. Improving permanency by reducing delays and improving the longer term outcomes for children.

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 York & 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.



11. Appendix B

Appendix B: Safe Priorities

North Yorkshire Children and Families Building Back Better

'SAFE' Strategic Priorities 2021-2023

The pandemic, as with other major societal events disproportionately affects members of society who are already marginalised, particularly those who experience higher levels of deprivation and poverty. Existing, well established partnerships, tried and tested methods of support and delivering our practice model well will continue to promote the safety and wellbeing of children. Higher levels of complexity will require greater **'professional curiosity'** and even greater resolve to support families. For some we need to **'build back better'** services to afford greater protection against societal change. For this reason we are introducing some additional 'SAFE' strategic priorities which work alongside our existing strategies but bring a microscopic focus, drive and pace to particular important issues. Please use this one page guide to develop your own awareness and focus and work together to assess gaps as a team.

Priority	Explanation	What will the organisation do?	What can you do?
S ystemic Practice	'Working With' families requires a deep understanding of context. How do they experience the world and its challenges in their family context? What are the difference in beliefs, power and lifestyle, visible and invisible, voiced and unvoiced? This complexity of understanding requires a knowledge beyond the family through the effective use of cultural genograms (at the start of our work).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission training for all staff within the service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop detailed understanding and use Cultural genograms
A utism	Families and Carers of children with neurodevelopment needs are often more isolated from wider networks of support. Resilience to maintain care can therefore be greatly compromised through life events which further limit the circle adults who can safeguard and support the child. Families require a tailored meaningful offer from a knowledgeable and confident workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop training offer for staff. Map and develop interventions for families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access Training CPD research Identify Team Guru
F amily Networks	Family Finding is an evidenced based model of practice which is central to our practice model and supports our ambition for children to have a strong lifelong network. 'Family Network Meetings' are therefore a non-negotiable method of organisational practice which ensures families have a right to be worked with using this powerful approach. This requires a highly skilled workforce to 'work with'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 day Family Finding training 2 day training on network meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access Training Implement Family Network Meeting Access FF Coach
E ducation	The pandemic has highlighted the important role education plays not just for a child but for the 'whole family'. A full education offer is integral to safeguard and protect children and to keep families together. A 25 hr offer provides the respite for adults to recharge and maintain personal resilience, particularly for those with additional needs. An education provides stability and social mobility for the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance skills through training IRO Challenge Not in 25hr Education group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge as a good parent Escalate stuck cases Expect 25hrs

Let's 'Build Back Better' Together

Contact us

W: www.northyorks.gov.uk E: 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