



# Family and Friends care in Camden

advice and  
information



Family and Friends care 020 7974 3082

## What is Family and Friends care?

Family and Friends care is where arrangements are made for a member of the child's family or a close family friend to look after the child while their parents are unable to care for them for any reason.

The arrangement may be made between the parent and the family member or friend but if the child is looked after by Camden the arrangement will be made by Children's Safeguarding and Social Work (CSSW).

## Why Family and Friends care

Social workers encourage Family and Friends care because they believe that it is better for some children than being looked after by a foster carer who is not known to them. This is because it is easier for them to keep in touch with their parents, friends and other family members, and because it helps them to maintain their religion, language and culture.

## Family and Friends care arrangements for a looked after child

Sometimes CSSW will have concerns about how a child is being cared for by their parents. If it is decided that the child needs to become looked after (comes into care) we will try and make arrangements for the child to live with a Family and Friends foster carer rather than an unknown foster carer.

The child's social worker, together with the parents, will approach relatives and friends to see if they are able to look after the child until the home situation improves. Sometimes a family group conference will be held to decide who the child should go to live with.

If a looked after child goes to live with a relative or friend, this person will become the child's Family and Friends foster carer and will be looking after the child on behalf of the council.

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## Assessing Family and Friends carers

Before a child can go to live with a Family and Friends carer, CSSW need to be certain that it is safe for the child to live with the carer and that they will be well looked after. To do this, the social worker will carry out a viability assessment.

The assessment will include checks with the police and other agencies so that CSSW can gather enough information to make a decision on whether the child can go to live with the carer. These checks will not be carried out unless you agree to them. However, a decision cannot be made without them.

Family members and friends are assessed on their ability to care for that particular child, looking at how the carer can meet the child's needs and keep them safe and what help they may need to do this.

If the viability assessment shows that the child will be safe living with the family member or friend, they will become a Regulation 24 carer and the child will be able to go to live with that carer.

However, there are some circumstances where someone cannot be approved as a Regulation 24 carer, for example where:

- The carer's home environment is not safe or secure enough, for example they may be evicted.
- The carer has no legal right to remain in the UK.
- The carer has a conviction for a criminal offence against a child, or has failed to declare a criminal offence.
- The carer's health assessment shows the carer is not able to care for the child.
- Child protection agencies have concerns about the carer or family looking after the child.

## Assessing Regulation 24 carers as foster carers

If CSSW decides that a looked after child should remain with their Regulation 24 carer for more than 16 weeks, the carer must be formally assessed as a Camden foster carer. This assessment will need to be started as soon as the child goes to live with the carer. The **foster care assessment** is an in-depth assessment carried out by a specialist social worker in the Adoption and Permanence team and the assessment must be completed within 16 weeks of the child moving in with their carer.

Any application to become a Camden foster carer has to be presented to the Adoption, Fostering and Permanence Panel who will make a recommendation to the Director of CSSW as the agency decision maker. They will then decide whether or not to approve the applicant as a Camden foster carer.

Social workers from the Adoption and Permanence team will meet with the carer to gather information for the assessment and will write a report to the Adoption, Fostering and Permanence Panel recommending whether or not the carer should become a Camden Foster Carer.

## Help and support

### General

All Family and Friends foster carers will receive support through regular home visits from their supervising social worker. Carers who are being assessed as foster carers will have an allocated social worker. The social worker will provide practical help and advice as well as emotional support. They may also provide any equipment that the carer may need to help them to care for the child.

Family and Friends foster carers are able to take part in Camden's foster carers' training programme, and will receive the same information and advice as other foster carers. They will also have access to foster carers' support groups and other services such as respite care. Family and Friends foster carers may also become members of the Camden Association of Foster Carers, and take part in consultations on service development.

## Financial

Family and Friends foster carers of looked after children will receive financial support from the fostering service to help towards the cost of looking after the child. The rates are based on the child's age.

## Long-term care

If a child is to remain living with a Family and Friends foster carer in the long term, CSSW can advise the carer about legal orders they can apply for to make the care arrangements more secure and permanent. These include Special Guardianship Orders, Child Arrangement Orders or adoption. Alternatively, the carer may wish to be assessed as a long-term foster carer for the child.

## Private Family and Friends care arrangements

Private family and friends care arrangements may happen when a family is in crisis, for example if a parent becomes ill and is unable to look after the child for a short time and the child goes to live with a family member of family friend. This arrangement can be supported by social workers, who can offer advice and financial help.

If the child is being cared for by someone who is **not** the child's:

- Grandparent
- Aunt
- Uncle
- Brother
- Sister
- Step parent

and the arrangement will continue beyond 27 days, then this will become a **private fostering arrangement**. See our "Are you looking after someone else's child?" private fostering leaflet for details of what you need to do. [www.cscb-new.co.uk/downloads/resources\\_and\\_leaflets/Private\\_fostering\\_booklet\\_\(PDF\\_321KB\)\[1\].pdf](http://www.cscb-new.co.uk/downloads/resources_and_leaflets/Private_fostering_booklet_(PDF_321KB)[1].pdf)

If CSSW are supporting a private arrangement (for example providing financial support), we will need to carry out an assessment of the child's needs to make sure we provide the right kind of support.

## Contact us

If you want to get advice or information about Family and Friends care you can speak to the child's social worker or contact the Adoption and Permanence team on: 020 7974 3082 and talk to the Duty Social Worker

## Complaints and suggestions

Camden wants to provide the best possible service. If someone using or planning to use our service is unhappy with any aspect of our service or a decision we make, they can make a complaint. Most people don't like to complain but sometimes things do go wrong, or you may feel that there is a better way of doing them. If you tell us about it, we can try to put things right.

It is the responsibility of the staff or their managers to try to put right any concerns that you may have.

If the complaint relates to services provided to a child or young person, the Children Act complaints procedure must be followed. The child or young person involved in the complaint will then be entitled to an advocate to support and represent them in the process.

You can get advice on making a complaint from the Information and Records Management team. You can contact the team on freephone 0800 393 561. Alternatively, you can fax 020 7974 1439.

If you prefer, you can write to the Complaints Officer at;  
Freepost RSLT-RJBR-TXAA  
London Borough of Camden  
Town Hall, London, WC1H 9JE.

We will acknowledge your complaint within three working days. You should get a full response within 21 days.



If you would like the Family and Friends Care in Camden: Advice and Information leaflet in large print, Braille, on audiotape or in another language, please phone 020 7974 5181.

**Children's Safeguarding and Social Work**  
Adoption and Permanence team  
Town Hall  
Judd Street  
London WC1H 9JE  
Tel: 020 7974 5181  
[www.camden.gov.uk](http://www.camden.gov.uk)

إذا أردت الحصول على نسخة من كتيب العناية بالأقرباء في كامدن: معلومات وإرشاد بالطبعة الكبيرة أو على الشريط أو بلغة بريل أو بلغتك الأم فالرجاء الاتصال مع رقم: 020 7974 5181.

আপনি যদি কিনশীপ কেয়ার ইন কেমডেন (কেমডেনে দত্তক পরিচর্যা) : এডভাইস এন্ড ইনফরমেশন (পরামর্শ এবং তথ্য) লিফলেট বা প্রচারপত্রটি বড় অক্ষরে মুদ্রিত আকারে, ব্রেইল বা অক্ষলিপিতে, অডিও টেপ বা বাজিয়ে শোনার কেসেটে অথবা আপনার নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চান, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে 020 7974 3028 নাম্বারে যোগাযোগ করুন।

اگر چنانچه میخواهید به جزوه راهنمایی و اطلاعات مربوط به پرستاری توسط بستگان درکمدن به صورت چاپ درشت – چاپ برجسته و یا نوار صوتی و یا اینکه به زبان خودتان دسترسی یابید لطفاً با شماره تلفن 020 7974 5181 تماس حاصل نمایید.

Si vous souhaitez obtenir la brochure « Garde parentale à Camden : conseils et informations » en gros caractères, en braille, sur support audio ou dans votre langue, veuillez contacter le 020 7974 5181.

Haddii aad doonaysid Daryeelka Qaraabada (Kinship Care) ee Camden: Warqad talo iyo macluumaad ah oo far waaweyn ku daabacan, habka dadka indhaha la' wax loogu qoro (braille), cajalad la dhageysan karo ku duuban (audio tape) ama afkaaga ku qoran, faqlan wac 020 7974 5181.

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