

Glossary



Term	Description
Care Plan	Every child in care should have a care plan which will include details of their needs and how these will be met and contain information about their placement and the longer-term planning for their care.
Children’s Social Worker	A social worker who is provided by the responsible authority to work with a child and to plan for their care. They are also responsible for meeting with the child to ensure that their needs are being met.
Children in Care	Children in care are subject to a care order, an emergency protection order or are compulsorily accommodated.
Children Looked After (CLA)	Please see below for Looked After Children
CIN	Abbreviation used for Child in Need. A child will be <i>in need</i> if they are disabled, or they are assessed by Children’s Services to be <i>in need</i> of extra support for their safety, health and/or development. If a child is assessed as a child <i>in need</i> , Children’s Services may provide the child and other people in the family, with extra help to look after the child, but it is not an absolute requirement.
Delegated authority	This is where the responsibility for making day to day decisions about a child has been delegated to the Foster Carer. This can include decisions on health, education, leisure (including permission slips for school trips and activities)
Designated Teacher (DT)	The DT is responsible for prompting the educational achievement of CLA in their school. The DT has lead responsibility for helping school staff understand how CLA can learn and achieve.
Family and friends carer	When a child is living full time with someone who is a family member, friend or was previously known to them. The majority of family and friends care is made up of informal arrangements between parents and relatives, but there are other situations and sometimes legal orders too. Where the child is looked after by a Local Authority and the family and friends carer is approved as the Foster Carer, this is known as family and friends foster care.

Family and friends foster care	Where a child was previously known to their Foster Carer and their Foster Carer was approved to look after them, this is known as family and friends foster care. More comprehensive guidance on family and friends foster care in England is given in Family and Friends Care: statutory guidance for local authorities.
Foster care agreement	An agreement between the fostering service and the Foster Carer which sets out matters such as terms of approval, the obligations of the Foster Carer, and what training and support the fostering service will provide for them. More information on what should be included in the Foster Care Agreement can be found In Schedule 5 of the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011.
Independent Fostering Provider (IFP)	An IFP is an organisation that places children into foster placements on behalf of the Local Authority. Some are profit making companies while other are charities or not for profit companies. A listing of IFP's that are members of the Fostering Network is available on Find a Fostering Service .
Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)	The IRO is a social worker who is responsible for the review of children looked cases. They chair the review for each individual child and monitor implementation of the care plan, as well as ensuring that the child's voice is heard and that their wishes are taken into account. You can find out more about the work of the IRO on the Department for Education's website .
Looked after child (LAC)	Anyone under age 18 who is looked after by the Local Authority, either because they are on a care order or they are accommodated through a voluntary agreement with their parents.
Parental responsibility	All the rights, duties, responsibilities and powers which the law gives a parent in relation to their child. Mothers automatically have parental responsibility as do fathers if married to the mother when or after the child was born or by other legal agreements. Parental responsibility can also be given by the courts to others under orders such as special guardianship or adoption.
Pathway plan	The pathway plan is completed as part of the leaving care process for each young person and includes any actions that have to be carried out by the responsible authority, Foster Carer, the young person themselves and any others involved.

Personal Education Plan (PEP)	The PEP is part of the child's care plan and gives information about the arrangements that have been made for their educational and/or training needs by the responsible authority.
Placement Plan	The placement plan forms part of the child's overall care plan and lays out how the placement will meet the particular child's needs.
Previously Looked After Children	Children who are no longer looked after in England and Wales because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order, or were adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales
Private fostering	An arrangement whereby a parent arranges for their child under 16 (or under 18 if they are disabled) to live with someone who is not a relative for more than 28 days. Private fostering arrangements must be notified to the Local Authority, who will visit periodically to ensure the welfare of the child. This is not the same as being a foster carer for a CLA, as the LA has not assessed the child as needing to be looked after.
Child Arrangement Order	An order granted by the court which gives the holder parental responsibility for a child, although they share this with anyone else who has parental responsibility.
Short breaks	These are a series of placements made for a limited amount of time where the child then returns to their parents. These children are not necessarily CLA, but might be.
Special Guardianship Order (SGO)	When the court makes a Special Guardianship order it gives parental responsibility to the special guardian, which they share with anyone else who has this. The order lasts until the child is 18, unless the court discharges it earlier.
Usual fostering limit	Under the Children Act 1989 Schedule 7, the number of children fostered by a Foster Carer is limited (the usual fostering limit). The current usual fostering limit is three children unless the children are all siblings although exemptions can be granted. More information about the usual fostering limit and its exemptions can be found in section 5 of The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services .