Family or friends put themselves forward to be assessed to care for the child if parents are unable to do so (be that as approved foster carers if child has to remain LAC, or under other legal option). It is essential for a Family Group Conference to be held to identify prospective carers to go forward for a viability assessment.

**Decision is made for child to be looked after and placed with a connected person or the child's plan is for Special Guardianship**

**Stage 1:** Initial viability screening

Completed by the Child’s Social Worker – this will be a desk top exercise to complete initial checks and decide if viability should move to next stage.

If this is satisfactory stage 2 must be undertaken

*(Reg 24 - assessment must be completed before child is placed)*

Section B Parts 1&2 of the Family and Friends/Connected Persons Assessment Report Form should be completed at viability assessment stage

**Stage 2:** Viability Assessment Visit

Referral for viability assessment is made to the Fostering Team Duty. A joint home visit & assessment of the potential carers is undertaken by the fostering worker and the child’s social worker. The interview is led by and the assessment form is completed by the fostering social worker with contributions from the child’s SW. Signed assessment (exc. Reg 24) must be sent to ATM, Fostering Team for allocation for full assessment of the connected person carers.

If assessment is for Reg 24, it must be sent to the Service Manager (Children Looked After) for authorisation

**Planned fostering assessment/SGO**

Fostering Team completes full Fostering or SGO assessment to meet timescales. Fostering and SGO assessments use the same Family and Friends/Connected Persons Assessment Report Form and Fostering assessments must meet Fostering regulation standards.)

If a Fostering assessment, this is presented to the Foster Panel for recommendation to the Agency Decision Maker

**Emergency Placement (Reg 24)**

In an emergency a child may become LAC and is placed with the carers under Regulation 24 (arrangements for the temporary approval of a connected person as a foster carer) to allow an immediate placement. Section B Parts 1&2 of the Family and Friends/Connected Persons Assessment Report Form should be completed for the Reg 24 approval

An emergency placement under Regulation 24 can only go ahead following agreement from the Service Manager (Children Looked After). A Regulation 24 placement must not exceed 16 weeks.
It is essential that there is evidenced consultation with the child’s IRO regarding the Care Plan.

Stage 1
Initial Screening
Capita One (ICS) and Police National Computer checks (Child’s Social Worker)

Stage 2
Viability assessment visit and write up undertaken by Fostering SW and child’s SW.

Full Fostering Assessment and/or SGO assessment
Fostering worker writes report using Family and Friends/Connected Persons Assessment Report form. Child’s SW to be clear if SGO needs to be considered alongside fostering assessment. If for SGO fostering worker also completes support plan (with advice from Adoption Support).

For SGO assessments and Support Plan – QA by Fostering Manager and sign off by Service Manager (Children Looked After)

Regulation 24: Temporary Approval - granted for up to 16 weeks by Service Manager (Children Looked After) Decision for Temporary Approval is given; Full fostering assessment undertaken

Regulation 25: 8 weeks extension can be granted by Foster Panel in exceptional circumstances

For SGO assessments and Support Plan – QA by Fostering Manager and sign off by Service Manager (Children Looked After)

Foster Panel & Agency Decision Maker
Recommendation and Approval

Court decision