



Gwasanaeth
Mabwysiadu | National
Cenedlaethol | **Adoption**
Service



WELSH EARLY PERMANENCE

Information for parents'
legal representatives



WELSH EARLY PERMANENCE: INFORMATION FOR PARENTS' LEGAL REPRESENTATIVES

Setting the scene for early consideration

Babies and children in the care system often have several moves whilst the courts decide who will care for them in the long term, and this is often at a time when days and weeks really matter. Research has shown that this level of disruption has far reaching effects on a child's mental health and development.

Welsh Early Permanence is a framework whereby a child is placed with a family who are fully approved as both foster carers and adoptive parents. You have been sent this information because one of your clients has been informed that Welsh Early Permanence is being considered as an option for their child.

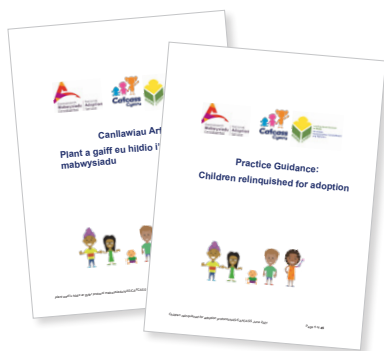
Pre-proceedings

- If there is a possibility that consideration will need to be given to a child being accommodated, Welsh Early Permanence is one of the options that should be considered by the child's social worker and local authority solicitors at "pre proceedings" stage alongside other permanency measures of undertaking assessments of parents and seeking out wider family members.
- Welsh Early Permanence can also be considered at later stages, for example, at the end of a residential assessment or following the disruption of a connected person placement (Reg 26 placement) during care proceedings.

Other possible options where Welsh Early Permanence may be considered:

- Welsh Early Permanence may also be considered in certain cases when a child is being, or has been, relinquished. These particular circumstances will be covered separately with specific information available. This should be read in conjunction with the [Good Practice Guidance for Adoption Agencies and Cafcass Cymru: Children Relinquished for Adoption](#), and adhered to.
- Following the making of a Care Order, upon the disruption of a connected person foster placement or disruption of a Placement with Parents placement, and the contingency plan is for adoption

Please refer to [WEP Flowchart 2: Care Planning and referral and with possible options from birth, during proceedings and following proceedings.](#)



For the child, Welsh Early Permanence removes the disruption and trauma of multiple moves by placing the child with Welsh Early Permanence carers who are dually approved as foster carers and adopters. This means that if the courts agree a plan for adoption for the child, there will be a seamless transition from a fostering to an adoptive placement, without the child having to move from carers with whom they have formed a bond.

All the risks in Welsh Early Permanence are borne by the Welsh Early Permanence carers and they will be fully aware of what these are; that in all cases, the court decides whether a child should return to her family or be adopted based on the evidence presented by professionals and the family.

As well as a chance to bond earlier with carers who might go on to become the child's parents, Welsh Early Permanence carers also have the benefit of getting to know the child's parents and to find out about their background and the reasons the child came into care. We know from research and evidence based practice that this greatly assists the development of empathy and acceptance and sets a positive foundation for communicative openness and ongoing relationships.

The fact that the carers may become the child's adoptive parents does not affect either the status of, or priorities for, the foster placement; neither does it affect the course of the care proceedings and the court's decision on the child's care plan at the end of the care proceedings. Parents should be reassured that their child is being well cared for, that contact is being well organised and that reunification, or placement with the wider family, will be facilitated in a professional and child centred way if that is the court's decision.

Though parents do not have the right to object to a WEP placement, as it is a properly regulated foster placement, every effort is made to inform both parents, their legal advisers, Cafcass Cymru and court, if necessary, of the benefits for the child, and also the parents, of the placement.

Please remember: All WEP documents should have an adoption alert attached

INFORMATION SHARING AND SUPPORT FOR PARENTS

Pre-proceedings

- Following consultation with parents and with parents' legal representatives, it was agreed that if Welsh Early Permanence is being considered, information for parents should be provided to them by the child's social worker as early as possible and that this should ideally be in different formats to accommodate different learning styles. Therefore, both written information in leaflet form as well as a short, recorded e module for parents have been developed.

In all of the information for parents there is advice to discuss the information with their solicitor. Parents consulted requested that a copy of the information provided to them should also be provided to their solicitor to ensure transparency and the opportunity to discuss.

There are 3 leaflets provided to parents at early stages and pre proceedings, the first of which contains brief, general information about Welsh Early Permanence. A copy of this leaflet has been included with this information.

The second leaflet (and recorded e-module as appropriate) will be shared with parents at pre proceedings stage and they should be given the support to understand that this is one of the options that is being considered, what it means for them and their child. A copy of this leaflet has been included with this information.

The third leaflet is specifically designed for parents who are considering relinquishing their child for adoption. This can be made available if appropriate on request.

- The child's social worker will need to ensure that the child's Guardian knows about Welsh Early Permanence and is aware that this is being considered for this particular child.
- Research highlights the benefits of access to independent support that is trauma informed from practitioners not involved in decision making for the child. Therefore, early referral to projects like Reflect should always been considered and discussed with the family by the child's social worker.
- The child's social worker will complete a comprehensive WEP matching document prior to placing the child with a Welsh Early Permanence carer on a fostering basis. This will contain risk assessments for the placement and for contact.

Care proceedings

The child's social worker will complete a plan for contact during proceedings which they will share with the child's parents.

This will include consideration of contact with additional family members.

On reunification

Upon any decision being made to reunify with parents or with wider family members, the Welsh Early Permanence carers will work with the child's social worker, the adoption social worker and parents to ensure a smooth and successful transition for the child.

Placement Order

If the court decides that adoption is the best plan for the child, then the carers who have been looking after the child would go on to become the adopters. This would mean a seamless transition for the child; they would have the security of adoption without an upsetting move to a new family and home.

In the case where a child has been placed with a Kinship foster carer on a Care Order or placed with parents (or those with Parental Responsibility) on a Care Order: if the contingency plan is adoption, Welsh Early Permanence will be considered.



For more information: www.adoptcymru.com/welsh-early-permanence-framework



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