



Kinship Care Support Service

Jargons and Abbreviations

Dealing with Social Services, now known as Children's Services, can sometimes be baffling. Here are some explanations of the abbreviations and jargons to help make things easier to understand:

PR	Parental responsibility – This is defined as being 'all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority, which by law a parent has in relation to the child and the administration of his or her property (Children's Act 1989, Section 3). What this means in practice is the right to make important decisions about how the child is raised, such as consent to immunizations and other medical treatment, whether or not a child can be taken abroad, which school the child attends etc.
EPO	Emergency Protection Order – This is an order from the court that allows a local authority to remove a child from a home and grants parental responsibility to the local authority. It can only be made if the court believes that: i) a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm if <ul style="list-style-type: none">• he or she is not removed from the place where he or she is at risk of harm into local authority accommodation or• he or she does not remain in the place where he or she is currently being safely cared for; or ii) the local authority is making enquiries about the child's safety and wellbeing and has not been allowed to see the child and cannot be sure s/he is safe by making enquiries with other agencies such as schools.
SGO	Special Guardianship Order: This is an order made by the court that places a child or a young person to live permanently with someone who is not their parent. It gives that person parental responsibility for the child, which they can exercise to the exclusion of anyone else with parental responsibility. The child's parent can only apply to discharge the order if s/he can

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	prove that there has been a significant change of circumstances since the order was made. It therefore provides legal security for a long term family and friends care arrangement and it would be unusual for it to be reversed.
PSO	Prohibited Steps Order – This is an order that the court can make to prevent certain actions in relation to the child from being taken. For example, the court may forbid the carrying out of medical treatment on a child or prevent a child from being brought into contact with a named person. Parents and others with parental responsibility have a right to apply for such orders.
SIO	Specific Issue Order – This is an order in which the court gives directions about how a particular question concerning the child’s upbringing should be resolved, when there is a disagreement between those who have parental responsibility for the child e.g.: whether or not the child should be immunised.
RO	Residence Orders – This is an order in which the court decides on the arrangements to be made about where, and with whom, the child is to live. It also confers parental responsibility for the child on that person.
CO	Care Orders – This is an order that the court can make where it is satisfied that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer harm as a result of the parents’ failure to effective care for the child or where the child is beyond parental control. It confers parental responsibility on the local authority and places the child in its permanent care. The local authority has legal responsibility for promoting the child’s welfare, and a range of related duties regarding care of the child, until he or she reaches 18 unless the order is discharged before then.
ICO	Interim Care Orders – This order places the child in the care of the local authority on an interim basis whilst the family is assessed and until the court can make a final decision about whether or not to make a care or supervision order.
Contact Order	This is an order which requires the person with whom a child lives to allow the child to visit or stay with the person named in the order, or for there to be other arrangements for the child and that person to have contact with each other.
Looked after child	This is a term which refers to all children who are subject to care orders and emergency protection orders and those who are in voluntarily accommodation with the local authority (see below). The local authority must consult with parents/carer with parental responsibility in relation to all decisions concerning looked after children.

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In care	This refers to a child who is subject to a Care Order (see above).
Accommodation	This term refers an arrangement whereby a child is looked after by the local authority by agreement with the parent/any carer with parental responsibility. It usually arises when the child's parent is unable to look after him/her, for whatever reason and the local authority has assessed their needs and decided it must provide the child with accommodation in order to promote their welfare. This might be when a parent is in prison or hospital. Local authorities must provide an accommodated child with somewhere to live and the child should be fully involved in drawing up the plans. A parent/person with parental responsibility should be asked to sign a consent form for the accommodation and to agree a written plan that should state that they are able to end the arrangement at any time and how this can be done. It will also set out contact arrangements to see the child.
Private fostering	This is a private arrangement made by a child's parent. It occurs if the child lives with someone who is neither a close relative (i.e. who is not his/her parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, sibling or step-parent) nor a local authority foster parents for 28 days or more. It applies to children under 16 years old (or 18 if they are disabled). The local authority must be notified of a private fostering arrangement following which it will monitor the arrangement and inspect the premises.
Child in need	<p>This describes a child who is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • disabled • unlikely to have, or to have the opportunity to have, a reasonable standard of health or development without services from a local authority; or • unlikely to progress in terms of health or development; or • Unlikely to progress in terms of health or development, without services from a local authority. <p>The local authority will decide whether or not a child is in need by carrying out an assessment of the child in their family circumstances. Where it decides the child is in need it should draw up a plan setting out which services it will provide to meet the needs which have been identified. The child's parents/carers will be consulted about this.</p>
LA	Local authority
LAC	Looked after child (see above)

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CAF	Common Assessment Framework - is a standardised approach to conducting assessments of children's additional needs and deciding how these should be met.
FC	Family courts
FGC	Family Group Conference – This is a way of supporting families to get together and try and make the best plan possible for children. The decision-makers at a Family Group Conference are the family members and not the professionals, but the plan made has to take account of any concerns that the local authority has identified.
ECM	Every Child Matters – a government policy document

For more information

Family Rights Group is an organisation which provides free telephone and e-mail advice to family members who are involved with the local authority about the care and protection of their children.

- Contact FRG's advice line for further advice, on 0808 801 0366. It is open Monday-Friday 10am-3.30pm.
- You can also email to advice@frg.org.uk.
- You can also visit www.frg.org.uk/advice_sheets.html where you can download their detailed advice sheets.