

## **Child factors informing a decision about long-term guardianship**

The following child factors are considered in relation to an assessment about long-term guardianship:

- the child's views about their care – consideration is given to their age, developmental stage, ability to understand, their attitude towards daily care and decision-making by their carers and the proposed change in guardianship
- information from the child's strengths and needs assessments, including any special needs, such as the need for treatment or therapeutic intervention in relation to the harm which the child has experienced
- the outcome of previous family reunification assessments
- the quality of the relationship and attachment the child has with the carers
- the quality of the relationship and attachment between the child and the parents, siblings, extended family members and other persons of importance to the child
- ongoing contact arrangements with family members and other persons of significance to the child, including the likely future maintenance of such relationships
- cultural considerations and how the decision to grant long-term guardianship may impact on the child's identity and future links to their community of origin
- the views of the recognised entity, where applicable, in relation to the above factors.

## **Family factors informing a decision about long-term guardianship**

The following family factors are considered in relation to an assessment about long-term guardianship:

- the efforts made to work with the family to resolve the child's protection and care needs in a timely way
- opportunities for parents and significant family members to participate in decision-making
- the parents views about the proposed change in guardianship
- the views of the child's siblings, in relation to the quality of their relationship with the proposed long-term carers
- the views of other family or community members of significance to the child
- ongoing family contact arrangements, including contact with siblings and extended family or community members, and the likely future maintenance of such arrangements
- any safety issues associated with family contact
- the quality of the parents, family members or other significant persons relationships with the child's carers
- case planning decisions in relation to siblings who may also be subject to child protection orders
- cultural considerations of importance to parents, extended family members and other persons of significance to the child.

## Carer factors informing a decision about long-term guardianship

The following carer factors are considered in relation to an assessment about long-term guardianship:

- the ability of the carers to meet the care needs of the child with a reduced level of intervention, including:
  - the carers ability to provide care in accordance with the legislated statement of standards as outlined in the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 122
  - details regarding matters of concern relating to the carers and their care of the child subject to the application for long-term guardianship and other children currently or previously placed with the carers
  - all child protection history relating to the carers own children, if applicable
  - the frequency and level of departmental support and services, including financial support, currently provided to the placement, and available to the child and carers, following the granting of an order
- the willingness and capacity of the child's carers to take on the responsibilities of guardianship, including:
  - potential guardianship decisions to be made by the carers, having regard to ongoing participation and information provision principles and requirements (*Child Protection Act 1999*, section 80)
  - ongoing financial responsibilities specific to the level and nature of the child's needs
  - the quality of the carers relationship with the child's siblings, parents, extended family or community and other persons of significance to the child, including conflict or difficulties considered likely to jeopardise the stability of the placement
  - the capacity of the carers to facilitate positive ongoing family contact and relationships between the child, their family, community and other persons of significance to the child
  - the ability and commitment of the carers to maintain a sense of personal history, identity and culture for the child, including connections with culturally appropriate persons or activities
  - the quality of the relationship and level of attachment the carers display for the child
  - the ongoing stability of the placement and the likelihood that the carers will maintain their commitment and guardianship responsibilities until the child attains independence.