

Where can I get more information?

For further information about the service please contact one of our co-ordinators:

CREST

Education & Children's Services
Perth and Kinross Council
REACH Building
Lewis Place
PERTH
PH1 3BD

Tel 01738 475199

Email CREST@pkc.gov.uk

If you have a complaint about our service, please email CustomerComplaints@pkc.gov.uk

To discuss a complaint or pass on a compliment you may also telephone our Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000, or write to:

Customer Service Centre
Perth & Kinross Council
Pullar House
35 Kinnoull Street
PERTH
PH1 5GD

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion, only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000.

You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

www.pkc.gov.uk

(PKC Design Team - 2021365)



CREST

CONNECTING RELATIONSHIPS EMPOWERING SUPPORTING TOGETHER



Lifelong Links

Staying Connected

Information
for
Professionals



Education & Children's Services
Improving Lives Together
Ambition | Compassion | Integrity

Relationships and long-term social connections are the cornerstone to child and family welfare; but we know that when children and young people enter the care system, they can lose touch with the people who mean the most to them. Lifelong Links supports children and young people to stay connected to, or reconnect with, people that are important to them in a planned, structured, and safe way.

Lifelong Links ensures that children and young people have lasting relationships upon which they can depend and that they:

- know more about their own history;
- have a sense of their origins and identity;
- have people to turn to for practical and emotional support.

Who is the service for?

Lifelong Links is for children and young people who are in permanent care with no plan to return home to their immediate family or to be adopted.

It is not about finding placements, it is about keeping and finding safe connections for the child or young person through their care journey and beyond.

Lifelong Links can also be used for children or young people in kinship care.

What is the process?

A person or local authority with parental responsibility for the young person must consent to the referral, and the young person must agree for Lifelong Links to go ahead. If you are unsure whether Lifelong Links is appropriate for a young person you can speak to one of our independent, accredited co-ordinators who will be happy to guide you through the process.

The independent co-ordinator will:

- meet with the young person and build a picture of all the people who are important to them using various tools such as genograms, eco-maps, timelines, and mobility mapping;
- ensure these people are safe by liaising with the social worker who will carry out background checks;
- with the agreement of the young person and the social worker, seek to find the people who have been identified;
- meet with these people to discuss how they may best be able to support the young person and support them through the process;
- support the young person to reunite with people in a way that feels right for them. This might be one-to-one, or in a group, or it might result in everyone coming together in a Family Group Meeting.

What is the purpose of the family meeting?

We encourage young people to bring their network together in a family meeting, where it is safe, so that they can agree and plan how best to support the young person long-term. This could be practical help and support or emotional support such as invites to family events, holidays, telephone calls, emails, cards, outings, etc.

We tailor our service based on what our young person tells us they want, so we might even talk to everyone individually and prepare a plan without bringing everyone together into an actual family meeting.

Who attends the meeting?

Family members such as parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters etc can attend the meeting, but it can be anyone that the young person has identified as being special to them such as friends, residential workers, youth workers, teachers, or foster carers. The social worker and co-ordinator also attend the meeting.

The Family Group Meeting includes private time which practitioners do not attend; this time allows families to share refreshments and make their own unique, safe, long-term commitment plans.