**Comparison of Legal Outcomes and Family Placement Type**

The table outlined below compares key needs associated with permanence and

benefits differing legal orders bring.

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| **Permanence Need** | **Child Arrangement Order/Special Guardianship Order** | **Adoption** | **Permanent Fostering** |
| Security & Identity | Child needs the security of a legally defined placement with alternative carers, but does not require a lifelong commitment involving a change of identity | Child’s primary need is to belong to a family who will make a lifelong commitment. Have good outcomes in terms of stability. | Primary need is for a stable, loving family environment whilst there is still a significant level of continued involvement with the birth family |
| Exercise of Parental Responsibility | Child’s relation, foster or other carer needs to exercise day to day parental responsibility and is prepared to do so as a lifelong commitment | Child’s birth parents are not able or not willing to share parental responsibility in order to meet their child’s needs | Child has a clear sense of identity and involvement with the birth family, whilst needing to be cared for away from home |
| Contact | There is no need for continuing monitoring and review by the Local Authority, although support services may still need to be arranged | Child needs an opportunity to develop a new sense of identity whilst being supported to maintain or develop a healthy understanding of their past | Ongoing need for continued monitoring and support by Local Authority |
| Support | Special Guardianship Support Services. or Child Arrangement Order Allowance | Adoption Support Services | There is need for continuing oversight and monitoring of the child’s developmental progress |
| Attachment | Child may have a strong attachment to the alternative carers and legally defined permanence is assessed as a positive contribution to their sense of belonging and security. Could support the maintenance of links to the child’s birth family. | Child expresses a wish to be adopted if old enough. Enables a child to have legal and emotional permanence through childhood and beyond. | Birth parents may be able and willing to exercise a degree of parental responsibility |