



Permanence journey data requirements for participation in PACE programme

Data for Improvement

The PACE programme uses the Model for Improvement framework to work with local partners to develop, test, and implement change that is intended to improve outcomes for looked after children and young people in Scotland. Data and measurement is an integral and pivotal part of the improvement process, and is used in the PACE programme to track each child on their journey to physical, emotional, and legal permanence, allowing local learning to support the process of change.

Journeys to early permanence

The Scottish Government defines “permanence” as providing children with a stable, secure, nurturing relationship and home, where possible within a family setting, that continues into adulthood¹. The government explicitly states that remaining or returning home should be the first option for permanence for young people. When this is not feasible, permanence is to be achieved with a relative or friend (kinship), with foster carers, or with adoptive parents. Permanence can also be achieved in a residential setting. Permanence data centres around the dates that key milestones are passed by children/young people on their journey to each of these destinations. We recognise that permanence at home raises particular challenges in terms of definition of milestones and collection of data, but it is essential that the journeys of this group of children are also tracked so that you have a complete picture of permanence in your area.

Local Authority commitment

When you agree to work in partnership to implement the PACE programme in your area, it is important to recognise at the outset that this entails a commitment to produce the data on individual journeys to permanence that you will need for local learning, and to understand the support that will be provided by the PACE team to assist with this. Although we will only seek to produce the minimum amount of data required to support the programme, production of permanence data is not a one-off task and, if not already in place, mechanisms must be established to produce and consider this data on a regular and on-going basis.

Local authorities are expected to nominate a contact who will take a lead role in relation to production of permanence data. The PACE team will liaise directly with this contact and anyone else nominated, and will provide support for the production, analysis and display of the required data. It is intended that local partnership areas

¹ Getting it Right for Looked After Children and Young People, The Scottish Government, 2015



become self-sufficient in relation to production of data to support PACE, and the PACE team will support this transition.

In order to maximise use of data for local learning on an ongoing basis, partners should also consider how and where the data will be analysed and utilised locally both at the individual case level, and for the service as a whole. This may involve making changes to existing systems, or establishing a new mechanism for bringing data together, and discussion and analysis of the data at existing or specifically convened meetings. Consideration of permanence data on a regular basis must become part of normal business.

How will permanence journey data be used?

Permanence data will be used in each phase of the PACE implementation, as shown in the table below:

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Contracting and baselining	Diagnosing and testing	Implementation
Dataset to baseline and set aims	Data to monitor performance against main improvement aims Balancing measures Children/young people between milestones	
	Data to monitor and evaluate tests of change	

In phase one (contracting and baselining) an agreed set of data will be used to establish current performance, both to provide a baseline against which the impact of change can be evidenced, and to allow improvement aims to be developed that reflect current performance and target areas where change is likely to have the greatest impact.

In phase two (diagnosing and testing), after improvement aims have been developed, a measurement plan will detail the data to be produced and analysed on a regular basis to allow the impact of change to be monitored to determine if improvement is achieved, and the extent to which aims are being met. Monitoring will continue into phase three (implementation) and beyond. Where required, the PACE team will assist partners to develop skills to produce monitoring data without the need for external support.

In addition to the main improvement aims, balancing measures will also be agreed and produced to ensure that improvement in one area does not have a detrimental effect on another part of the process. The number of children/ young people who are waiting to pass a milestone will also be produced so that a full picture of all those involved in a process are included.



In phases two and three, as tests of change (the specific actions intended to achieve aims) are introduced, measurement will help to determine if they are working, which will then inform decisions about further development and deployment.

Initial Permanence data for baseline and development of aims

Which children/young people?

All currently looked after children and young people

All children/young people who have ceased to be looked after in the last year

Respite to be identified or excluded

Permanence milestone dates for PACE

The following tables show the suggested set of data that is likely to be relevant to you when trying to understand your system and learn about the journey of the child through the services provided by partner agencies. Some of these milestone dates are already collected as part of the CLAS return to the Scottish Government, including the three new dates that are to be collected so that a permanence dataset can be derived from the return. As there is a requirement to capture and report on these dates, we have based the PACE suggested dataset around them in order to minimise the burden of additional recording.

Although it is by no means exhaustive, we have learned from other areas who have participated in PACE that they have found it useful to capture this information. Partners in each local authority area may also wish to focus on other milestone dates that have particular local relevance. For example one area has identified the date of their legal advice meeting as a key milestone. Further local requirements may emerge as the programme progresses.

The matrix in Annex 1 will be used with the nominated data contact to determine data availability, and will inform an initial data specification which will be agreed early in phase one. This is likely to include the following:

Date child/young person became looked after (start of current episode of care)
Date child was first accommodated away from home (first placement in current episode)
Date child was last accommodated away from home (start of latest period of accommodation)
LAC review (or other meeting) recommends pursuing permanence at home or away from home for child



Date of Fostering/Adoption/Permanence/Kinship Panel
Agency Decision Maker approval of decision to pursue permanence for child
Date of move to (intended) final placement (even if not yet legally secured)
Date of application submission to court
Date that legal permanence is secured for child, including termination of order when permanence at home is achieved

The additional fields below will allow further local analysis

Unique information system identifier
Date of birth
Gender
Current placement type (including home)
Current placement start date
Current legal status/type of order
Current legal status/type of order start date
Current team/locality

Additional data

In addition to these key milestones on each child’s journey to permanence, the legal status and placement history that local authorities provide as part of the CLAS return can be particularly informative, allowing the number of placement moves and changes of legal status to be analysed.

Data sharing



CEL CIS will supply a data sharing agreement which details how data will be transferred and stored. Data should be provided in an Excel spreadsheet with one row for each child and the above dates and additional fields used as column headers. CEL CIS can supply a suitable template.

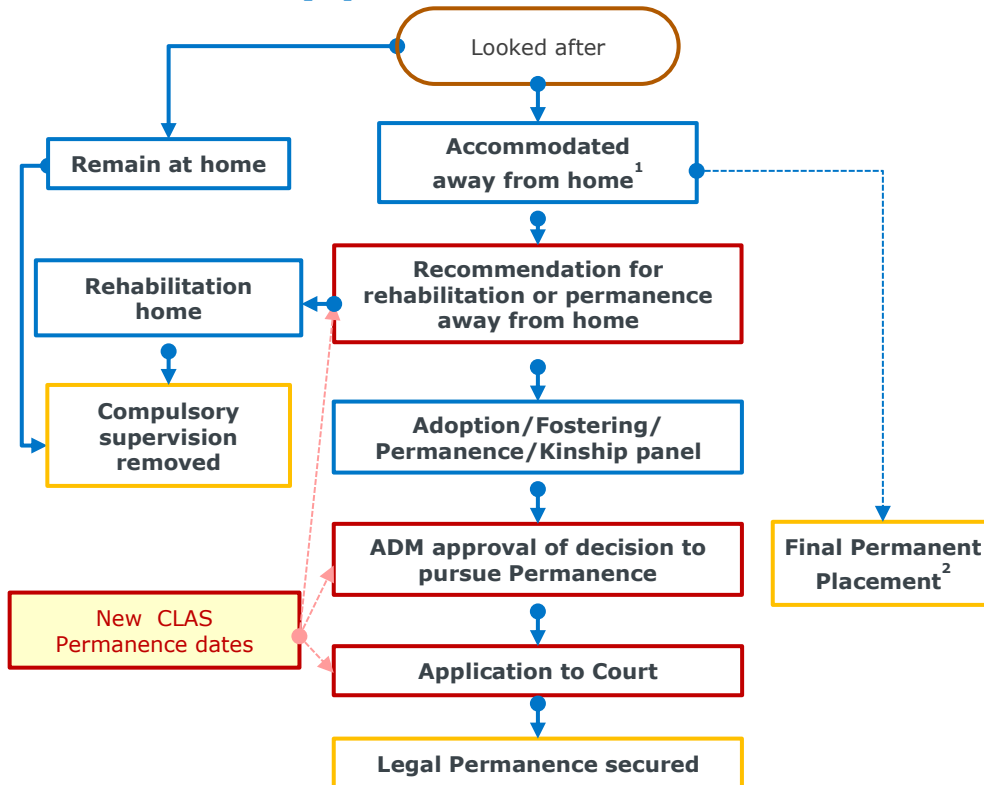


Annex 1: Matrix to determine appropriate data points and availability

	Fostering/ Adoption	Kinship	Remaining at home	Rehabilitation home	Residential
Became looked after					
First accommodated					
Last accommodated					
Permanence recommendation made					
Fostering/Adoption/ Permanence/Kinship panel					
Agency Decision Maker sign off					
Application submission to Court					
Date order granted					
Final Placement					



Annex 2: Key permanence milestones



¹First accommodated away from home and last accommodated away from home

² Child/young person could be in final permanent placement (no further moves planned before adulthood) before the Agency Decision Maker approves permanence. Legal permanence could also be secured through a Permanence Order with Authority to Adopt before the child is in their final placement.