

# KINSHIP FOSTERING SERVICE



**Information about  
support to Kinship  
Carers**

## **Kent County Council has a responsibility to make sure all children in its care live in a safe and caring environment.**

The Government are placing a higher priority on the assessment and support of Kinship Carers, and released the Kinship Strategy in December 2023 [Championing kinship care: national kinship care strategy - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/124444/Championing_kinship_care_national_kinship_care_strategy.pdf)

As a response to this KCC recently launched a new Kinship Service within Kent Fostering, offering an assessment service for all types of formal kinship care which includes Kinship Fostering, Special Guardianship and Child Arrangement Order arrangements.

In addition, Kinship Foster Carers and Special Guardians will be fully supported within the Kinship Service, with the Kinship Fostering Support Team supporting kinship foster carers and the SGO & Therapeutic Fostering Support Team supporting Special Guardians.



## SGO Support

In order to offer support to families, a current SGO must be in place with the child(ren) the order relates to, still in residence. We shall also need to know:

- ❖ Was the SGO granted in Kent?
- ❖ Was the SGO granted in another LA but over 3 years ago and you live in Kent?
- ❖ Do you think you would benefit from support?

If the answer to these questions is yes, we are then able to offer you the following support:

- ❖ Social Work Assistant Assessment of Need as a Family?
- ❖ Support in negotiating Educational Needs?
- ❖ Training in relation to Trauma / Attachment
- ❖ Training in relation to caring for teenagers
- ❖ Access to a therapy service via the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund if the child was previously in care.  
(See overleaf)
- ❖ Peer Group Support / Coffee Mornings

## Contact Us

If you think you or a family you work with would benefit from this support then please contact Kent County Council via:

[Request for Support - Professionals \(kent.gov.uk\)](https://www.kent.gov.uk) or

**Phone : 0300 041 1111 or Email: [social.services@kent.gov.uk](mailto:social.services@kent.gov.uk)**

## **Further Support**

Providing a safe and loving home under an SGO can be challenging. It is recognised that this can be difficult and stressful at times. Kent County Council provides additional support services that can be accessed by special guardians and those they care for.

## **Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund (ASGSF)**

When an assessment is completed, Kent County Council may identify that therapeutic services funded by the ASGSF would be beneficial to support your family. If this is the case, Kent County Council will apply to the Fund directly. If successful, the ASGSF will release funding to Kent County Council which uses the fund to commission and pay agreed providers of therapeutic services. This will ensure the right support for you and your family at the right time.

## **Pupil Premium Funding for previously looked after children**

Schools can receive Pupil Premium funding for pupils who have left care under an Adoption, Special Guardianship or Child Arrangements Order, from reception age to Year 11 in state-funded education in England. Eligible schools will receive £2,570 for any child who has ceased to be looked after by a local authority in England or Wales because of adoption, a special guardianship order, a child arrangements order (previously known as a residence order). Please note, this is not a personal budget for each child, but should be used for the cohort of previously looked after children in line with the school's Pupil Premium Grant planning.

[Pupil Premium for Previously Looked After Children | Virtual School Kent \(lea.kent.sch.uk\)](http://lea.kent.sch.uk)



## Virtual School Kent

Virtual School Kent acts as a local authority champion to promote the progress and educational attainment of children and young people who:

- ❖ Are in the care of the local authority
- ❖ Have left care under an Adoption, Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Order
- ❖ Are being supported by a social worker (or who have been in the last 6 years)
- ❖ Are living in formal kinship arrangements.

The Advisory Team at VSK can offer email advice, telephone consultations and advice to families and schools to support the educational provision for children living under a Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Order.

Please complete the Referral form [Initial Contact Form](#) or email [VSKAdvisoryTeam@kent.gov.uk](mailto:VSKAdvisoryTeam@kent.gov.uk) for more information.

The Virtual School website is full of additional information and guidance to support families, education settings and professionals and can be accessed through the following link: [Home | Virtual School Kent \(lea.kent.sch.uk\)](http://lea.kent.sch.uk)



## **PAC-UK Special Guardianship Support Service**

- Kent Special Guardians and professionals supporting them also have free access to the PAC-UK Special Guardianship Support Service.

This offers:

- ❖ A dedicated SGSS website containing up-to-date information and guidance, downloadable resources and signposting to other sources of support.
- ❖ A specialist Advice line staffed by qualified and experienced PAC-UK counsellors who can provide advice and information on all aspects of special guardianship.

Their contact details are:

- [www.specialguardianshipsupport.org.uk](http://www.specialguardianshipsupport.org.uk)
- Phone 0300 1800 090
- Email [advice@pac-uk.org](mailto:advice@pac-uk.org)

They are open from:

- Monday, Tuesday and Friday 10.00am to 4.00pm.
- Wednesday and Thursday 10am to 7.30pm

Access PAC-UK's dedicated Education Advice Line during term-time only:

- every Wednesday from 12.00pm to 2.00pm
- Phone: 0300 1800 090
- Email [education@pac-uk.org](mailto:education@pac-uk.org)



## **Kinship Compass**

Kinship Compass is an independent online information, advice and support hub just for kinship carers. It is the leading kinship care charity in England and Wales and works with all kinship carers, including grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles and family friends, who are caring for children when their parents are unable to.

It supports local kinship peer support groups, offers free workshops, training and events as well as working closely with the Government, Local Authorities and Virtual Schools to champion the needs of these children and their families. Visit [www. www.compass.kinship.org.uk](http://www.compass.kinship.org.uk) for more details.

## **Further Resources**

### **Government Documentation**

Championing Kinship Care. The National Kinship Care Strategy. December 2023, Department of Education.

[Championing kinship care: the national kinship care strategy \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

**03000 420 002**

** Kentfostering [kentfostering.co.uk](http://kentfostering.co.uk)**

