

**FOSTER
FOR
KENT**



Our Kinship Service

This leaflet contains information about our support to kinship carers

03000 420 002

f Kent Fostering kentfostering.co.uk



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

The government continues to place a high priority on the assessment and support of kinship carers, following the release of the Kinship Strategy in December 2023¹.

Kent County Council have launched a Kinship Service within Kent Fostering Service in April 2024, 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 Special Guardianship Order and Therapeutic Support Team supporting special guardians.



Special Guardianship Order Support

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

- Was the Special Guardianship Order granted in Kent?
- Was the Special Guardianship Order granted within another local authority but over 3-years ago and you live in Kent?
- Do you think that you would benefit from support?

¹ LINK: [Championing kinship care: national kinship care strategy - GOV.UK](#)

If the answer to any of 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 and attachment.
- Training in relation to caring for teenagers.
- 1:1 therapeutic parenting support.
- Access to a therapy service through the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund, if the child was previously in care (see overleaf).
- Kinship support group and coffee mornings.

Contact Us

If you think you or a family that you work with could benefit from this support, please contact Kent County Council by:

- **Website:** [Request for Support - Professionals](#).
- **Phone:** 03000 411 111.
- **Email:** social.services@kent.gov.uk.

Further Support

Providing a safe and loving home under a Special Guardianship Order 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

When an assessment is completed, Kent County Council may identify that therapeutic services funded by the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund would be beneficial to support your family.

If this is the case, Kent County Council will apply to the fund directly. If successful, the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund 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.

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 living in formal kinship arrangements.
- Have left care under adoption, special guardianship or Child Arrangement Order.
- Are being supported by a social worker, or who have been in the last 6-years.
- Are in the care of the local authority.

Virtual School Kent's Advisory Team works with schools and other professionals supporting schools, to ensure a universal understanding around the needs of the children and young people we champion. The exceptional circumstances leading to children not living with their birth parents are often associated with adverse childhood experiences and trauma.

The effects of these can become a barrier to their learning. Although these children are now living in safe, loving homes; it is important to remember that this does not eliminate their past experiences, which can have a lasting impact, particularly at school.

The Advisory Team at Virtual School Kent also offers advice to families and schools to support the educational provision for children living under special guardianship or Child Arrangement Orders. Please complete the [referral form](#) or email vskadvisoryteam@kent.gov.uk for more information.

The Virtual School Kent's [website](#) is full of additional information and guidance to support families, education settings and professionals.

Pupil Premium Funding for Previously Looked After Children

Eligible schools receive £2,570 pupil premium funding for any child who has ceased to be looked after by a local authority in England or Wales because of adoption, Special Guardianship Orders or a Child Arrangement 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 schools [pupil premium grant planning](#).

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.

Further Resources

[Championing Kinship Care: The National Kinship Care Strategy](#), December 2023, Department of Education.

Kent County Council's Privacy Notices

[Privacy Statement](#)

[GDPR Privacy Notices](#)