

## **Information for Kinship Carers**

Kinship carers are family members and friends raising children who cannot live with their parents. They are sometimes called family and friends carers.

### **When do children live with kinship carers?**

There are many reasons why children live with kinship carers. It may be due to parental ill health, disability, imprisonment, or death. Some children may not be able to remain at home because they have suffered significant harm or are at risk of suffering significant harm. These can be short or longer term arrangements.

### **Different types of kinship care arrangement.**

#### **1. Private family arrangements**

Where a child cannot be cared for within his or her immediate family, the family may make their own arrangements to care for the child within the family and friends network.

The parent continues to hold parental responsibility and is able to make decisions about the child. Their parental responsibility cannot be restricted.

#### **2. Private fostering**

Someone who is not a close relative of the child and not already an approved foster carer looks after a child for 28 days or more and will then be regarded as private foster carer.

#### **3. 'Lives with' child arrangements order**

Under this court order the child will live with the kinship carer named in the order and the carer will share parental responsibility with the parents.

#### 4. Special guardianship

A special guardianship order is a court order that says a child will live permanently with someone (who is not their parent) until they are 18. A special guardianship order gives the special guardian 'enhanced' parental responsibility for the child. This gives them the authority to make all major decisions about the child's upbringing and care. The order restricts the birth parents' rights but does not permanently end them.

#### 5. Kinship foster care

Sometimes a kinship care arrangement involves a child becoming looked after by children's services. This might be under a care order, or under a voluntary arrangement. The carer is known as a kinship foster carer.

#### Support and Responsibilities Under Different Care Arrangements

The below table is adapted from information provided by the Family Rights Group. The full table can be found at [Types-of-kinship-care-arrangement-quick-reference-table-MAIN-PAGE.pdf \(frg.org.uk\)](http://www.frg.org.uk/Types-of-kinship-care-arrangement-quick-reference-table-MAIN-PAGE.pdf)

	<b>Private Family Arrangement</b>	<b>Private Fostering</b>	<b>Kinship Foster Care – child subject to a court order</b>	<b>Kinship Foster Care – child looked after under voluntary arrangement (s.20 Children Act 1989)</b>	<b>Child Arrangements Order</b>	<b>Special Guardianship Order</b>
<b>Will the carer be assessed?</b>	No	Yes – a Private Fostering assessment will be completed	Yes – a Connected Persons fostering assessment will be completed	Yes – a Connected Persons fostering assessment will be completed	Yes – the Court will request a Social Worker or Cafcass Guardian to complete a section 7 report	Yes – a Social Work assessment will be required by the Court

					(Children Act 1989)	
<b>Who has legal parental responsibility (PR)?</b>	<p>Mothers</p> <p>Fathers who have parental responsibility through being named on birth certificate or having court order</p> <p>Anyone else who has PR via a court order</p>	The Local Authority and any other person with PR e.g. parents	<p>Mothers</p> <p>Fathers who have parental responsibility through being named on birth certificate or having court order</p> <p>Anyone else who has PR via a court order</p>	Person who has the Child Arrangement Order and any other person with PR e.g. parents	Person who has the Special Guardianship Order and any other person with PR e.g. Parents	
<b>Who can make decisions on behalf of the child</b>	Carer can make day to day decisions about child's care Only those with PR can make important decisions. For example, about giving consent to medical treatment; the child leaving the UK.	Carer can make day to day decisions about child's care Only those with PR can make important decisions. For example, about giving consent to medical treatment;	Carer can make day to day decisions about child's care Only those with PR can make important decisions. For example, about giving consent to medical	Person with 'lives with' CAO/RO can make decisions without having to consult others with PR (although should be for important decisions). There are some restrictions e.g.:	The person with the SGO has the right to exclusion of anyone else with PR, but some restrictions e.g.: name change, consent to adoption or adoption placement, change of religion	

		the child leaving the UK.	treatment; the child leaving the UK.	name change, consent to adoption/ placement, change of religion.	
<b>Can the child be removed from the kinship carer?</b>	Yes, by someone with parental responsibility.	Yes, by the children's services department who have the care order.	Yes, someone with parental responsibility can withdraw consent for the arrangement.  If a parent (or carer) with parental responsibility is in a position to remove their child, no notice is required. No restrictions should put on the parent in relation to their right to remove their child.	No, unless the Child Arrangement Order is ended. Or children's services have an emergency protection order or (interim or final) care order	No, unless the Special Guardianship Order is ended. Or children's services have an emergency protection order or (interim or final) care order

<p><b>Is the kinship carer entitled to practical and financial support from children's services?</b></p>	<p>Parents remain financially responsible for the child.</p> <p>Discretionary support (including financial) for children in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, where the child is assessed to be in need.</p>	<p>Anyone who is approved as a kinship foster carer should receive a fostering allowance for the looked after child in their care.</p> <p>Other practical support equal to that provided to unrelated foster carers should be provided.</p>	<p>Parents remain financially responsible for the child.</p> <p>Children's services may pay a means tested child arrangements order allowance, but they don't have to.</p>	<p>Children's services must assess the need for support services, including financial help, only if a child was 'looked after' in the care system immediately prior to a special guardianship order being made.</p> <p>In all other cases, undertaking an assessment of need for support services is discretionary. Financial help is discretionary and the level of support is means tested.</p>
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If you have any queries please speak with the child's social worker.