Example Special Guardianship Support Plan Dated:

Names are pseudonyms

To be completed prior to Special Guardianship Order (SGO) being obtained

|  |
| --- |
| CHILD |
| Name: | Maisie | Surname: | Smith | Date of birth: |  |
| Ethnic origin: | White/British | Religion: | N/A |
| Currently legal status: | Interim Care Orders – children already placed in the couple’s care since 27/11/2020 | Applications for other Orders: | N/A |
| Date recommended by Looked After Children Review/Court: |  |
| PROPOSED SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP FAMILY |
| Name: | Jane  | Surname: | Smith | Date of birth: |  |
| Ethnic origin: | White/British | Religion: | N/A |
| Name: | John  | Surname: | Smith | Date of birth: |  |
| Ethnic origin: | White/British  | Religion: | N/A |
| CHILDREN IN FAMILY |
| Name(s): | N/A | Date(s) of birth |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

Support Plan

|  |
| --- |
| 1. HEALTH |
| Identified Health Needs* include needs, strengths and difficulties of child, including any special needs which a disabled child may have or significant medical history, e.g. presentations to casualty.
 | Specific Support Plan to meet Health Needs* include needs, strengths and difficulties of carers, roles, services and timescales
 |
| Maisie had a natural birth with no complications. She has no disabilities or significant medical conditions. Maisie’s childhood immunisations are up to date. Maisie had a Looked After Child health assessment on 23/12/2020.Maisie does experience mild asthma symptoms and uses a blue reliever inhaler as required. Maisie also experiences occasional migraine type headaches. It is suspected that these are linked to her emotional wellbeing and times of worry as opposed to there being any underlying physical condition. Carers will monitor this and seek advice from the GP if concerned.It is noted that Maisie is overweight with her BMI being just over the 99.6th centile. Jane and John generally follow a Slimming World diet and so encourage home cooked, balanced meals. They also encourage Maisie to have regular walks in the fresh air. Maisie is taking part in a Healthy Me programme at school which aims to support her in reducing her weight. | The couple feel confident that they are able to continue to meet the children’s health needs through attendance at routine health appointments. They will also role model eating a balanced diet and encourage physical activity such as walking and swimming.Jane undertakes regular First Aid training though her employment.Should the couple be concerned about any medical conditions it is advised that they follow this up with the GP as necessary. They can also call the non-emergency NHS helpline 111 or 999 in an emergency.If the couple need additional support, they can contact Wiltshire Council Kinship & Fostering Team. Contact details are in Section 8. SGO support will remain the responsibility of Wiltshire Council for three years post the SGO being granted. After three years, the responsibility for SGO support (other than financial support) will rest with their home Local Authority. At time of writing, this is Somerset Council.  |

|  |
| --- |
| 2. EDUCATION |
| Identified Educational Needs-include needs, strengths and difficulties of child, including issues/concerns raised at school/nursery) | Specific Support Plan to meet Educational Needs* include needs, strengths and difficulties of carers, roles, services and timescales
 |
| Maisie is in Year 7 and attends a mainstream secondary school on a full-time basis. She has continued to attend throughout recent Covid19 restrictions.Maisie reports to enjoy going to school and carers and professionals feel that Maisie receives a good level of support. Due to the distance between the carers’ home and the school, Maisie does have a long journey to and from school each day. If an SGO is granted, the plan would be to enrol Maisie in a school local to the carers’ home. Maisie’s favourite subject is Art, but she also likes Maths and English. At times, Maisie can struggle to concentrate and retain information and school report that in general Maisie is underachieving. However, she is observed by teachers to be hard working and trying hard to focus. There are no identified specific educational needs and it is likely that any difficulties with school are due to previous poor attendance and the emotional impact of the family situation.  | The couple have a positive attitude towards education, ensure that the children’s attendance is excellent, maintain regular communication with the school and encourage learning at home. If an SGO is granted, the children will move from their current school to a school local to them. Jane will consider which school will best meet the needs of the children and will look at the pastoral support available, not just academic provision. Should the couple have any future concerns about the children’s development it is advised that they follow this up with the Education provider, SEND service and G.P. Due to their previously Looked After Child (LAC) status, the children’s school will be eligible for Pupil Premium Plus funding. The couple may be required to provide the school with a copy of the SGO to allow them to claim this. If the couple need additional support, they can contact Wiltshire Council Kinship & Fostering Team. Additionally, the couple could call upon the support of the Virtual School Officer in their home local authority. All relevant contact details are in Section 8.SGO support will remain the responsibility of Wiltshire Council for three years post the SGO being granted. After three years, the responsibility for SGO support (other than financial support) will rest with their home Local Authority. At time of writing, this is Somerset Council. |
| 3. BEHAVIOURAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT |
| Identified Issues regarding Behavioural, Social andEmotional Development -include needs, strengths and difficulties of child | Specific Support Plan to assist with Behavioural, Social andEmotional Development* include needs, strengths and difficulties of carers, roles, services and timescales
 |
| There are no significant behavioural, social or emotional difficulties that Maisie presents. She does have friends at school, but they can ‘fall out’. It is also noted that sometimes, Maisie can present as domineering towards younger sister. However, in general, Maisie has settled well in the care of Jane and John and she often presents as happy. During her LAC health assessment, Maisie scored her level of happiness as being 4 out of 5. Maisie receives pastoral support and counselling sessions at school. Maisie enjoys positive reciprocal relationships with wider family members, especially her aunty/current carer and prospective Special Guardian, Jane.It is noted that both children have been exposed to many years of domestic violence and frightening adult behaviours. The children have at times complained of nightmares, stomach bugs and migraine type headaches, which are attributed to stress and worry. Although the children are happy with Jane & John, their wish is to be able to return to their mother’s care. Therefore, if the decision is made that they are to remain in the couple’s care, this will no doubt have an emotional impact. This, along with their earlier experiences, increase the likelihood that they will present with some emotional/behavioural issues.  | The couple feel able to continue to support the children in these areas of development. Jane and John have undertaken some learning relating to trauma, attachment and behaviour. Additionally, through her employment, Jane has undertaking training in the PACE model of parenting – an approach that is theraputic and relevant to the needs of the children. Jane is eager to increase her knowledge and skills in this area which is a definite strength. If additional support is required, the couple should first seek advice from the GP, School, SEND service and or CAMHS. If the couple feel that therapeutic intervention is needed, a needs assessment can be undertaken as part of SGO support and if appropriate, an application can be made to the Adoption Support Fund. If the couple need additional support, they can contact the Kinship & Fostering Team. All relevant contact details are in Section 8. Wiltshire Council hold a monthly kinship support group (when Covid19 restrictions allow) and periodically send out newsletters to Special Guardians relating to relevant training, workshops, conferences etc (if consent is given to be on the mailing list). However, due to the couple’s location, it would benefit them to be able to access events closer to their home in Somerset. Therefore, Somerset Kinship Team have confirmed that (if carers consent), they can be placed on their mailing list and would be welcome to attend training, support groups etc.SGO support will remain the responsibility of Wiltshire Council for three years post the SGO being granted. After three years, the responsibility for SGO support (other than financial support) will rest with their home Local Authority. At time of writing, this is Somerset Council. |

|  |
| --- |
| 4. ATTACHMENT |
| Identify any issues concerning attachment need of the child | Specific Support Plan to address any concerns regarding attachment * include needs, strengths and difficulties of carers, roles, services and timescales
 |
| As above | As above |
| 5. IDENTITY |
| Identify needs regarding Identity (including cultural, ethnicity and religion) | Specific Support Plan to promote Identity needs* include needs, strengths and difficulties of carers, roles, services and timescales
 |
| There are no specific religious or cultural issues identified.The children are of the same White/British heritage as their carers (the prospective Special Guardians).The children would be remaining within their own birth family which will support their sense of identity and belonging.  | The couple are aware that as the children become older, they are likely to have more mature and complex questions about their birth parents and how they came to live with their aunty and uncle. If the couple were to experience any issues, they can contact Wiltshire Council Kinship & Fostering Team to assist with Life Story Work if needed.SGO support will remain the responsibility of Wiltshire Council for three years post the SGO being granted. After three years, the responsibility for SGO support (other than financial support) will rest with their home Local Authority. At time of writing, this is Somerset Council.All relevant contact details are in Section 8. |

6. **FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

6.1 In relation to financial support,Special Guardians Regulations 2005 reg (6) provides that financial support is payable to facilitate a placement of a child when it is necessary to ensure that the Special Guardian can look after the child. Any SGO allowance payments require authorisation from Head of Service (authorisation to be confirmed on a completed PPA1 form). Allowances are paid on a fortnightly basis. **There is no guarantee that an SGO allowance will be paid for the duration of a child’s minority.**

6.2 If there are any specific requests for financial assistance pre or post SGO being made, e.g. costs related to a house move or equipment costs, a case can be put forward to the Head of Service who has the final decision. Each request will be judged on the individual circumstances but there are no guarantees that any such request will be agreed.

6.3 Special Guardians are required to enter into a written agreement with Wiltshire Council in which they agree to inform the council of any changes to their financial circumstances. This is a condition of any SGO allowances being paid. Linked to this, Special Guardians agree to undergo a means test and an annual review of their financial situation.

6.4 Where a Special Guardian was a foster carer for the child *immediately* before the SGO was granted, Wiltshire Council will provide a two-year transitional payment regardless of the Special Guardians individual circumstances. This transitional payment will be paid regardless of the outcome of a means test. **The allowance will be based on an age-related scale and NOT the fostering allowance that they receive as foster carers.** A means test will be applied at the end of the 2 years.

6.5 Special Guardians can and should make a claim for Child Benefit and the child element of Universal Credits. They will be expected to submit this claim within three months of an SGO being granted and the SGO allowance will be deducted accordingly. If carers are not eligible for Child Tax Credits/Universal Credit, then they may be asked to provide proof of this.

6.6 If Special Guardians experience any issues or difficulties in relation to the SGO allowance they can contact Placement Services Finance Team for assistance. Alternatively, or for advice with other financial matters, they can access SGO Support via Wiltshire Council Kinship & Fostering Team.

|  |
| --- |
| 6. FINANCIAL SUPPORT |
| Financial questions/considerations | Yes/No/Comments |
| Are you recommending any financial support to the placement? If so, please specify all that apply. All requests for any financial support must be authorised by Head of Service via a completed/signed PPA1 form.**(a) Time limited payment for a specific reason? If so, please specify** (*for example, temporary child care while carers work their notice period*)**(b) Lump sum for a particular item. If so, please specify.***(for example, lump sum payment to purchase bedroom furniture or essential baby equipment)***(c) Ongoing financial support as an SGO allowance payment? If so, child’s need must fall into of these categories. Please provide as much detail as possible.**Does the child currently attract any additional payment due to particular needs? (e.g. soiling, wear and tear due to behaviour)Is the child part of a sibling group who need to remain together?Does the child have ongoing or longterm emotional or behavioural difficulties due to past abuse or neglect?Is the child placed with a family member and without additional resources would the child remain on a Care Order? | Yes – regular SGO allowance paymentsN/AN/AYes, as per Wiltshire Council policy, the couple will be eligible for a guaranteed SGO allowance for two years after the SGO is made. This is due to them being foster carers for the children prior to the SGO being granted. As above, after the two years, any SGO allowance is subject to a means test and management approval. SGO allowance payments for two years (based on current rates):£396.44 per fortnight for Maisie.In addition to these allowance payments, the couple will be able to claim Child Benefit and the child element of Universal Credits.  |

**7. ANY OTHER SUPPORT MATTERS**

SGO Support Plans can be reviewed upon request or as needed and as such are a fluid document subject to change. This is in recognition that children’s needs change as they age and develop and the personal circumstances of each family and Special Guardian(s) can change over time. *Please identify any other specific support matters here – for example, support needs relating to housing.*

**Special Guardian Mailing List (please delete as appropriate)**

* Carers confirm that they wish to be added to the mailing list to receive notifications of training events, workshops, support groups and services that may be relevant to them as Special Guardians.
* Carers DO NOT wish to be added to the mailing list to receive notifications of training events, workshops, support groups and services that may be relevant to them as Special Guardians.

N.B. Carers can choose to opt in/opt out as they wish.

**Future private law applications**

Special Guardian is aware that either of the child’s birth parents could seek to challenge the Special Guardianship Order through the courts and feels he /she understands the potential implications of this. Under these circumstances Special Guardian can seek advice and support from Wiltshire Council’s Kinship & Fostering Team.

**SGO support services subscriptions**

Wiltshire Council Special Guardians have the opportunity to access an annual subscription with the following during 2020/2021 (These subscription services end July 2021):

**National Association of Therapeutic Parenting (NATP)**

The NATP was founded in 2017 by Sarah Naish to provide support, training and advice to all families of children who have suffered developmental trauma. Membership provides access to online resources, online and telephone support and discounts for training events. Carers are able to take out their own subscription as and when they wish but during 2020/2021, Wiltshire Council are able to fund this service for Special Guardians. To access this, please email: membership@naotp.com and quote the reference: AdoptionWest20

Wiltshire Council would be grateful if Special Guardians could inform us if they are accessing this service so that we can monitor uptake.

**Family Action Special Guardian Support Service**

This is a charity run organisation who provide a support service specifically for Special Guardians. They can be contacted via email, freephone, text or webchat via the dedicated website. The support is a bespoke/individual 1:1 service and can include assistance with matters such as, how to manage contact; helping a child to feel secure; supporting a child with a special need or health condition; supporting a child’s identity and working with schools.

Contact details: Username: WiltshireSGO
Freephone: 0808 802111 Password: WiltshireSGO2020$ *(password and user name are case sensitive)*

Text: 07537 404281

Email: sg.support@family-action.org.uk

Website: [www.specialguardiansupport.org.uk](http://www.specialguardiansupport.org.uk)

8. **CONTACT DETAILS** – Wiltshire Council and Other useful resources**:**

* SGO Support can be accessed via Wiltshire Council Kinship and Fostering Team, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 8JN; 01225 716510 or email: kinshipduty@wiltshire.gov.uk
* Wiltshire Council Kinship & Fostering financial administrators can be contacted on: 01225 716510. Contact name: Judith Redmond
* Wiltshire Emergency Duty Service: 0300 456 0100
* Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 0300 456 0108
* **Wiltshire Kinship Support Group.**. The group usually meet on the last Thursday of each Month between 10.00am – 12.00pm. There are occasional guest speakers and workshops. However, this is currently on hold due to COVID19. Further details can be accessed via telephone number: 01225 716510 or kinshipduty@wiltshire.gov.uk
* **Kinship (formally known as Grandparents Plus)** – This is a national charity (England and Wales) set up to support grandparents and other family members caring for a relatives child, be that formally (as kinship foster cares) or informally. They can help with emotional support and financial and practical advice. More information can be found on their website, [www.kinship.org.uk](http://www.kinship.org.uk) which includes details of support networks and support groups. They can be contacted on their advice line: 0300 123 7015 or email: advice@kinship.org.uk
* **Family Rights Group** – This is a national charity organisation. They can be contacted on Freephone number: 0808 801 0366. Website: <https://www.frg.org.uk> email: office@frg.org.uk
* **Virtual School –**PLAC@wiltshire.gov.uk , phone number is 07887 793885. Contact name: Karen Tremayne.
* Somerset Council SGO support services are provided by their Kinship Team and can be contacted on: kinshippod@somerset.gov.uk
* Somerset Virtual School have a designated inbox for queries for previously Looked After Children: PLACInclusionSomerset@somerset.gov.uk

|  |
| --- |
| 9. FAMILY TIME POST PLACEMENTSupport arrangements for birth parents should take into consideration facilitating contact |
| Family Time Arrangements | Type | Frequency | Venue | Support Arrangements |
| Mother- Father –  | Direct & indirectDirect & indirect | TBCTBC | TBCTBC | At time of writing, all direct family time/visits are supervised by either Jane & John or by maternal grandparents, as agreed with Children’s Services. The couple are willing to continue to facilitate visits between the children and their mother but would welcome recommendations in relation to frequency and required supervision levels. The couple foresee that family time will take place outside of their home. I would suggest that all parties are given a written agreement that clearly sets out recommendations for family time/visits. Ultimately, the couple will be able to make decisions that are in the best interests of the children. At time of writing, Jane & John supervise indirect family time in the form of a video call, once per week. The children have direct family time once per week which is supervised by Children’s Services staff at a resource centre.As above, the couple feel that there should be a clear recommendation and written agreement in relation to father’s family time/visits that stipulates frequency and supervision levels required. Further discussion is needed in relation to whether the couple feel confident in supervising father’s time with the children and this will be dependant on the outcome of the parenting assessment and any risks that may be highlighted. The couple foresee that family time will take place outside of their home. It is recommended that prior to the conclusion of Care Proceedings, the allocated Safeguarding SW for the children gives a clear recommendation on arrangements and if required, supports father in identifying suitable supervision. Centres offering facilitated and supervised family time sessions can be found on the NACCC website.https://naccc.org.uk/ |

Signature: Date:

Name

Title

Signature: Date:

Sarah Gray, Assistant Team Manager

Kinship & Fostering Team