



# **Kinship Support Team**

**Post-18 Support**

**April 2023 to March 2027**

---

## **Contents**

### **Kinship Support Team – Post-18 Support**

Signposting for Kinship Carers.....	Page 2
Adoption Support Fund.....	Page 2
Letter for support for Education.....	Page 2

### **Additional Support and Services**

Care Leaver Eligibility.....	Page 3
Adult Social Care.....	Page 3

<b>Appendix 1</b> – template letter – Signposting.....	Page 4
--	--------

<b>Appendix 2</b> – template letter – Education.....	Page
--	------

<b>Appendix 3</b> – Care Leaver Eligibility Criteria.....	Page
---	------

---

## **Kinship Support Team – Post 18 support**

The Kinship Care Support Team provide assessment of need and support services to Kinship Carers, who are caring for children within their family and friend’s network, through a Special Guardianship Order, Child Arrangement Order, or no legal Order. This guide provides an overview of the support that is available to those nearing 18 years old and for post-18 support.

### **Signposting for Kinship Carers**

A template letter\* is available for Kinship Carers requesting advice in preparation for the young person turning 18, which outlines support and services regarding the journey to independence post-18. **\*See Appendix 1**

### **Adoption Support Fund**

If the young person was previously in foster care, and therefore entitled to therapeutic support funded by the Adoption Support Fund (ASF), the team can make an application to ASF to be provided until the young person’s 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, or 25<sup>th</sup> birthday if they have an ongoing Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP).

### **Letters of Support for Education**

The team can provide support letters\* to Carers and young people to pass on to University and Colleges confirming the young person’s kinship or previously ‘in care’ status, and supporting their need for bursaries and any other support available. **\*See appendix 2**

---

## **Additional Support and Services**

### **Care Leaver Eligibility**

If a young person has been previously 'looked after' for 13 weeks or more (after the age of 14/16) prior to granting of Special Guardianship Order (SGO), they may be eligible\* for support from the Care Leavers Team to be assessed for a 'leaving care package'. The young person can be allocated a personal advisor from 17 years old, to assist with their transition into independence, including CAMHS transition to Adult Mental Health Services. If care leavers are not entitled to free prescriptions, NHS Sussex (ICB) have agreed to provide an annual pre-payment card. **\*See appendix 3 for Care Leaver Eligibility Criteria.**

The Care Leavers Team are accessed via the Integrated front Door: [WSChildrenServices@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:WSChildrenServices@westsussex.gov.uk) or [01403 229900](tel:01403229900)

### **Adult Social Care**

A referral to Adult Social Care can be submitted to undertake a Care Needs Assessment from 18 years old. A referral to the Transitions Team for a Panel meeting will be automatically sent if the child has a life-long disability/illness that will require ongoing support into adulthood; this referral can also be submitted if the child is likely to need extensive ongoing support in their adulthood.

## Appendix 1 – template letter – Signposting

### Use headed note paper

Dear **Special Guardian**

We note from our records that **child's name** is approaching 18 years old, and write to provide information and advice about services they may be eligible for, that may be beneficial for you now and in the future:

### Adoption Support Fund

If the young person was previously in foster care, and therefore entitled to therapeutic support funded by the Adoption Support Fund (ASF), the Kinship Support Team can make an application to ASF to be provided until the young person's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, or 25<sup>th</sup> birthday if they have an ongoing Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP).

### Letters of Support for Education

The Kinship Support Team can provide support letters to Carers and young people to pass on to University and Colleges confirming the young person's kinship or previously 'in care' status, and supporting their need for bursaries and any other support available.

Please contact the Kinship Care Support duty team on [specialguardianshipsupport@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:specialguardianshipsupport@westsussex.gov.uk) or call 01403 229700 to request the above support services

### Adult Social Care

A referral to Adult Social Care can be submitted to undertake a Care Needs Assessment from 18 years old. A referral to the Transitions Team for a Panel meeting will be automatically sent if the child has a life-long disability/illness that will require ongoing support into adulthood; this referral can also be submitted if the child is likely to need extensive ongoing support in their adulthood.

Adult Social Care can be contacted here: [How to get adult social care support - West Sussex County Council](#)

### Care Leaver Eligibility

If a young person has been previously 'looked after' for 13 weeks or more (after the age of 14/16) prior to granting of Special Guardianship Order (SGO), they may be eligible\* for support from the Care Leavers Team to be assessed for a 'leaving care package'. The young person can be allocated a personal advisor from 17 years old, to assist with their transition into independence, including CAMHS transition to Adult Mental Health Services. If care leavers are not entitled to free prescriptions, NHS Sussex (ICB) have agreed to provide an annual pre-payment card.

The Care Leavers Team are accessed via the Integrated front Door: [WSChildrenServices@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:WSChildrenServices@westsussex.gov.uk) or [01403 229900](tel:01403229900)

**\* Please note Care Leaver eligibility is complex, please contact us to discuss if you are unsure about eligibility.**

### Signposting

The following services may be of use to you:

- Your Space provides a range of different services to young people including advice on housing, advocacy, health, education, work and lifestyle - [www.yourspacewestsussex.co.uk](http://www.yourspacewestsussex.co.uk)
- CAMHS can refer young people they are working with, and those who will require ongoing mental health support to Adult Mental Health Services.
- Be OK West Sussex is a free mental health service for people aged 16 to 25. They provide confidential support which promotes independence and helps to build resilience - <https://e-wellbeing.co.uk>
- Mind offer a range of mental health services for young people (16-25), carers, older people and families - <https://westsussexmind.org>
- Citizens Advice provides support and advice to young people in relation to money and debt, benefits, and housing - <https://advicewestsussex.org.uk>
- Find it Out Centres (up to 25yrs old) – provide advice and guidance, as well as helping find local services, make referrals, and talk about the young person’s needs. They can provide up to five sessions direct work with young people to focus on what you need support with; this includes family work - [www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/your-space/places-to-go/finditout-centres/](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/your-space/places-to-go/finditout-centres/)
- The West Sussex Local Offer helps provide information on local services, support and events for young people (up to 25yrs old) who have special education needs or disabilities (SEND) - <https://westsussex.local-offer.org>
- Autism and Social Communication Team (Inclusion) are a small team of Advisory Teachers and Specialist Learning Support Assistants who provide learning support (up to 19yrs old) for children and young people on the autistic spectrum and/or with Social Communication difficulties - <https://schools.westsussex.gov.uk/services>
- Pathways Home is a housing support service that can be accessed through the Housing Needs Team. They can provide support while working collaboratively with Housing and Health and Social Care - <https://www.southdown.org>
- Jobcentre Plus and the Department for Work and Pensions can provide support to young people in respect of benefits and financial support - <https://www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus>

We hope that this information is useful as you and **child's name** move into the next stage of life and adulthood. Please do contact the team if you require any further information or advice.

Yours Sincerely,

West Sussex Kinship Care Support Team

## Appendix 2 – template letter - Education

### Use headed note paper

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Child's name college/university place**

I am writing to you regarding **child's name** as they have been offered a place at **college/university name**, and I would like to provide you with some important information to ensure that **child's name** has a successful time within your educational setting.

**Child's name** is a \* **delete as appropriate** previously 'Looked After Child' and/or\* living with a family member under a Special Guardianship Order/ Kinship Care arrangement.

Due to their experience, **child's name** may have particular vulnerabilities or needs, and will benefit from any additional support that might be available during their time with you. Other information that may be helpful to share about **child's name** is **add relevant information**.

It is important that any bursaries or additional support should be made available to **child's name**, to ensure that they have a smooth transition into higher education. If a bursary is awarded to **Child's name**, **he/she** will be able to use the skills and knowledge that they have acquired to continue to achieve in their education, providing a good opportunity to help them reach their academic and career goals.

If you require any further information, please contact the Kinship Care Support Team on [specialguardianshipsupport@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:specialguardianshipsupport@westsussex.gov.uk) or 01403 229700.

Yours Sincerely,

West Sussex Kinship Care Support Team

---

### **Appendix 3 – Care Leaver Eligibility Criteria**

Care Leavers who meet criteria of Eligible, Relevant and Former Relevant below are entitled to support as follows:

#### **Eligible Child**

- Young person aged 16 and 17
- Young Person will have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14
- Young person is still looked after
- Entitled to, a Personal Advisor, a Needs Assessment, a Pathway Plan, receive all the care and support they normally receive until they leave care

#### **Relevant Child**

- Young person aged 16 and 17
- Looked after by children's services for a period of 13 weeks since the age of 14
- Looked after for a period of time after their 16th birthday
- No longer looked after
- Entitled to: a Personal Advisor, a Needs Assessment, a Pathway Plan, Accommodation and maintenance financial support to meet education, training and employment needs

#### **Former Relevant Child**

- Aged between 18 and 21 or between 18 and 25 if still in full-time education
- Previously an eligible child and/or a relevant child
- Entitled to: a Personal Advisor, a Pathway Plan, kept under regular review, assistance with employment, education and training, assistance with accommodation, help with living costs
- Once a former relevant child becomes 21, they can choose whether to continue to have support and this can continue until they are 25.

#### **Qualifying child**

- Aged between 16 and 21 or between 16 and 25 if still in full-time education
- Looked after by children's services on, or after, their 16th birthday and no longer looked after
- Spent less than 13 weeks in care since 14th birthday, i.e. do not fulfil criteria for eligible or relevant child
- Entitled to, Advice and assistance from Leaving Care Service which may, be financial help with living expenses and if they are in higher education, they may also help with securing vacation accommodation. There is not an entitlement to a Pathway Plan or Personal Advisor

#### **Qualifying Child:**

Special Guardianship Order

- 
- Young person age 18-25
  - You were being looked after when a Special Guardianship Order was made
  - Advice and assistance from Leaving Care Service which may, be financial help with living expenses and if they are in higher education, they may also help with securing vacation accommodation. There is not an entitlement to a Pathway Plan or Personal Advisor