



Special Guardianship Support

A guide for special guardians
and their families



SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP
NORTH LONDON



2 Special Guardianship Support

North London Fostering and Permanence Consortium

The North London Fostering and Permanence Consortium is a partnership of six north London boroughs; **Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey and Islington**. We work together to provide support services and training to special guardians.

Who is this leaflet for?

This leaflet is for special guardians and their families living in or assessed by one of the north London consortium boroughs.

Special Guardians support plan agreed at court

If your child was under care proceedings prior to the SGO being made, you are entitled to ask to be assessed for a range of support services. The agreed support is then written into the child's Special Guardianship Support Plan and can be reviewed. Types of support include:

- ▶ Identifying local and universal services such as health visitors, school places, benefits and tax credits.
- ▶ Accessing therapeutic services for the child to help with feelings or behaviour.
- ▶ Help in developing the relationship between you, the special guardian, and the child and helping them to settle.
- ▶ Advice about school placements and extra support in school (pupil premium) and priority school placements.
- ▶ Support your parenting skills.
- ▶ Advice and support about contact with parents, siblings and other family members.
- ▶ Financial support in some cases.

Children who were in court proceedings were likely to be under an interim care order. These children qualify for support.

Support while your child is growing up

There is a lot of support available for you and your child.

Special guardianship families where the child was in court proceedings prior to the SGO being made are eligible for extra support from the Support Fund once a child is placed in their new family home. You will need to have a short assessment to help identify what support would work best for your child.

There are many types of support available, here are some examples:

- helping your child feel settled in your care
- help with managing the changes and upsets in their lives
- improving their behaviour
- getting the best out of contact with parents, siblings and other birth family members
- understanding their behaviour and helping them express their feelings

Each borough in the consortium has a team of social workers dedicated to special guardianship families. You can contact them for information and support on a range of services including accessing the Support Fund. The contact details for each borough in the consortium are detailed at the end of this leaflet.

Other Special Guardianship Support Services

Kinship

They offer help to grandparents and other family members raising children whose parents are unable to care for them.

- ▶ **Campaign for change:** Kinship campaign for improved rights for kinship carers locally and nationally – you can join for free.
- ▶ **Advice Line:** they can check you are receiving all your financial entitlements.

Kinship Connected

Kinship Connected is an independent service provided by Kinship. They offer:

- ▶ **Individual support:** a project lead, who is a special guardian herself, will visit you, listen to your concerns and see how best Kinship Connected can help. The Kinship Connected programme can help eligible carers who are living in any of the London boroughs of Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey and Islington.
- ▶ **Support Groups (face to face and virtual):** local experienced kinship carers who can give you advice and support.
- ▶ **Local support groups:** special guardians can meet in a safe place to share concerns and meet other families in a similar position.

PAC-UK

In addition, the consortium provides a range of services for special guardians through PAC-UK; a voluntary agency providing support for special guardianship families that includes an advice line for general queries, individual and family counselling and support with contact through a mediation service.

PAC-UK provides: an advice line for education queries, such as transitions from primary to secondary school, how to approach schools to get the best help for children or understanding priority admissions to specific schools.

Pupil Premium and priority admissions

If your child was in court proceedings before the SGO was made, they are likely to be eligible to the Pupil Premium Plus. This is a financial payment to state schools. The funding is to be spent on helping children emotionally, socially and educationally, and gives schools the flexibility on how the money is spent. Your child may also qualify for priority admission into a school. Do speak to the school, they will need a copy of the SGO.

Training, workshops and support

There are support groups across the consortium facilitated by Kinship,

where you can meet other carers – just like you. Some groups will invite guest speakers on subjects that special guardians have said they want more information on.

For more details, ask your support team or you can contact them directly – details on page 7.

There are workshops for special guardians that gives guidance on such things as understanding your rights as a special guardian, managing contact and talking to your child about their early life. There are also one-day courses on contact, trauma and behaviour and life story work.

We recommend that you make the most of the free training and support. Additional workshops are also available under the support fund such as 'mindfulness' and parenting a child who has had changes and upset.



Consortium Boroughs

If you have any further questions, please contact your local borough.

BARNET

Barnet Children's Service

2 Bristol Avenue,
Colindale NW9 4EW

020 8359 5705

specialguardians@barnet.gov.uk

CAMDEN

Camden Family Services

Crowndale Centre,
218 Eversholt Street,
London NW1 1BD

020 7974 3082

specialguardians@camden.gov.uk

ENFIELD

Enfield Children's Services

Charles Babbage House,
1 Orton Grove, Enfield EN1 4TU

020 8379 8490

specialguardians@enfield.gov.uk

HACKNEY

Hackney Children and Families Service

1 Hillman Street, London E8 1DY

020 8356 5379

Monday, Wednesday and Friday
from 10.30am–3.30pm

special.guardians@hackney.gov.uk

HARINGEY

Special Guardianship Assessments and Support Team

3rd Floor, River Park House,
225 High Road, London N22 8HQ

020 8489 3754

assessmentandSGsupport@haringey.gov.uk

ISLINGTON

Permanence Team

3 Elwood Street, London N5 1EB

020 7527 1012

PTDuty@islington.gov.uk

Useful contacts:

To find out more about Special Guardianship, you may wish to contact any of the independent national organisations listed:

CoramBAAF

A charity dedicated to improving lives for children and young people in care.

41 Brunswick Square,
London WC1N 1AZ

020 7520 0300

Monday to Friday: 9am–1pm

corambaaf.org.uk

Fostering Network

A charity focusing on improving foster care and making a positive difference for children in care and leaving foster care.

87 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8HA

020 7620 6400

Monday to Sunday: 9am–9pm

fostering.net

Kinship and Kinship Connected

A charity that supports grandparents and other family members who take on the caring role in difficult family circumstances.

The Foundry, 17 Oval Way,
London SE11 5RR

Advice Line: **0300 123 7015**

advice@kinship.org.uk

Main Office: **0330 016 7235**

info@kinship.org.uk

kinship.org.uk

National Association of Child Contact Centres (NACCC)

5 Russell Place, Nottingham NG1 5HJ

0115 948 4557

Monday to Friday: 9am–1pm

nacc.org.uk

National Family Mediation

0300 4000 636

nfm.org.uk

PAC-UK:

Provides specialist independent advice, counselling, training and educational advice.

Unit 3, Wharf Studios, 34 Wharf Road,
London N1 7GR

020 7284 5879

pac-uk.org

The Family Rights Group (FRG)

FRG works with wider family who are raising children who can not live with their parents and when there is a risk that a child may go in to care.

18 Ashwin Street, London E8 3DL

0808 801 0366

Monday to Friday 9.30am–3pm


frg.org.uk



Need to find out more?

If you would like to have a discussion about any of the topics in this booklet, please speak to your local authority support team, as listed on page 6.

Alternatively, visit us online for updates:

 specialguardiansnorthlondon.co.uk

