



For family or friends who
step up to raise a child.



Checklist: questions to ask a school

Kinship carers' experiences of working with schools form the basis of these questions. All questions might not be relevant to you. But we hope this will help guide a positive conversation with the school.

General questions

- What resources, help and support do you have in school to support my child, family and myself?
- How can we work together to support my child in the best possible way?
- Are kinship children treated differently? If so, how?
- Are there any other kinship children in the school?
- What is your safeguarding policy?
- How do you work with your virtual school? What are the virtual school contact details?
- How do you support children with transitions, such as moving up to secondary school?
- Do you have wraparound childcare?

Funding

- How is pupil premium and pupil premium plus spent in the school and how will my child benefit from this? How do you involve carers in deciding how to spend this money?
- Is there any funding for clubs or after school activities we might be able to access?
- Is there any funding for trips, school uniforms or other needs that we might be able to access?

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

- What SEND support is available?
- Who is your SENCo?
- What percentage of children at the school have SEND?
- What's your experience of education, health and care plans (called an EHC plan or EHCP)?

Updates and communication

- Who is the designated teacher or member of staff responsible for looking after kinship children?
- How will you keep me updated on how my child is doing?
- Do you have a single point of contact for parents and carers?
- Can we identify a trusted adult within the school for my child to speak to if they have any concerns in the school day?
- My child refers to me as [insert name], how will you ensure this is respected across communications?

- This is how we describe our family set up, how will you ensure this is communicated with all relevant staff and how will it be respected in the classroom?
- How will you consider my child's feelings when talking about mum and dad in the classroom?

Your relationship and situation with the parents will determine if you want to discuss:

- special arrangements for collecting your child from school (especially for primary school)
- who is and is not allowed to collect your child
- restrictions on parents collecting your child. Consider using a password that any adult who is allowed to collect your child will give to the school staff
- a plan on what to do if the parents come to the school trying to collect your children or ask for information about them over the phone
- at secondary school, where there are fewer controls over collecting children, any issues you think may come up around contact between the parents and the school.

Mental health, trauma informed practice and additional support

- What extra support is my child entitled to? How will you assess what extra support they might need?
- What mental health, emotional wellbeing and therapies might be available through the school? For example, is there a counsellor available in school?
- What accommodations are you able to make for my child, such as more time in exams, extra learning support or one to one time with teachers?
- Have any staff been trained in trauma-informed practices? Are staff aware of the effects of early childhood trauma and able to support my child? Do you have experience of working with children with attachment issues or who have experienced trauma?
- What reasonable adjustments can you make for young people who have experienced trauma?
- Do you have a behaviour policy and if so, does this take a trauma- informed approach?

kinship.org.uk