



Special Guardianship Support

A guide for special guardians
and their families



SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP
NORTH LONDON



North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium

The North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium (NLAFC) 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 or assessed by one of the north London consortium boroughs.

SG support plan agreed at court

Special guardians, if your child under care proceedings prior to the SGO being made, 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 & 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.
- ▶ Supporting 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 best support 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.

Grandparents plus

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

- ▶ **Campaign for change:** the Grandparents Plus Support Network 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 Grandparents Plus. They offer:

- ▶ **Individual support from Kinship Connected:** a project lead, who is a special guardian herself, will visit you, listen to your concerns and see how best Kinship Connect 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.
- ▶ **Drop-in coffee mornings:** local experienced kinship carer 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.

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 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 visit our website.

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 & 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.



More information

Don't forget to sign up with your local SG support team to receive the Special Guardians World newsletter, training events and the annual fun day for all the family. The newsletter is packed with information about training support and advice, or visit the SG website:–
www.specialguardiansnorthlondon.co.uk.

Get in touch

Get in touch if you need advice or support for you or the child you are caring for, please contact your local borough.

BARNET

Barnet Children's Service
Nth London Business Park
Oakleigh Road South
London N11 1NP

020 8359 5705
adoption@barnet.gov.uk

CAMDEN

Camden Family Services, Crowndale
Centre, 218 Eversholt Street
London NW1 1BD

020 7974 3082
adoption@camden.gov.uk

ENFIELD

Enfield Children's Services, Triangle
House, 305-313 Green Lanes,
London N13 4YB

020 8379 8490
adoption@enfield.gov.uk

HACKNEY

Hackney Children and Young
People's Services, 1 Hillman Street,
London E8 1DY

020 8356 5379 (9am-5pm)
020 8356 2710 (5pm-9am)
permanencyservice.duty@hackney.gov.uk

HARINGEY

Haringey Children & Young People's
Service, River Park House, 225 High
Road, London, N22 8HQ

020 8489 2347 & 020 8489 3108
adoption.duty@haringey.gov.uk

ISLINGTON - Family Plus Islington

Family Plus Team
3 Elwood Street
London, N5 1EB

020 7527 1012 Mon, Wed and Fri
from 10am-1pm
familyplus@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
www.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
www.fostering.net

Grandparents Plus & Kinship Connected:

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

0300 123 7015
www.grandparentsplus.org.uk

National Association of Child Contact Centres (NACCC)

Tel: 0845 4500 280 / 0115 948 4557
(Mon to Fri 9am-1pm)
www.naccc.org.uk

Nation Family Mediation

0300 4000 636
www.nfm.org.uk

PAC-UK:

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

5 Torriano Mews
Torriano Ave
London NW5 2RZ

020 7284 5879
www.pac-uk.org

The Family Rights Group:

A charity that supports and works with parents of children involved with Children's Services.

0808 801 0366
www.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:



www.specialguardiansnorthlondon.co.uk

