

One Adoption West Yorkshire

Special Guardianship Document Framework

Assessment Documents, Support Plans, Audit Tools – Description

*John Short & Eva Booth
2 January 2020*

The information set out below provides an explanation of how the One Adoption West Yorkshire– Special Guardianship Document Framework can be used and the intended purpose.

1. Special Guardianship Support Plan

The Special Guardianship Support Plan provides a comprehensive planning tool that can be used after the initial assessment and planning process to set out the support to be provided to a) the child/young person, b) the Special Guardian and their family and c) the child/young person's birth family. The Support Plan has been split into several sections and should be used to set out core information about the child/young person, the Special Guardian, the birth family and also those who will be providing input and support into plan. The Support Plan has been split into areas of need and provides a framework to set out what support will be provided, by whom and how and if it is to be provided to the child/young person, the Special Guardian, or the birth family. The final section of the Support Plan provides an opportunity for the child/young person, the Special Guardian and the birth family to set out their views and finally provides an audit trail for sign-off by the local authority and all parties and a proposed review date.

The Support Plan can be reviewed by updating and changing the information in the Plan. The Plan should be reviewed on a yearly basis and/or whenever there are significant changes or transition points (e.g. moving to a new house, transferring from primary to secondary school). Where there are no, or only minor changes required, the Support Plan can be reviewed and up-dated by changing the dates that the Plan was created, reviewed and adding a review date of a year hence.

2. Special Guardian Assessment – For Support Plan Up-Date

The Special Guardianship Assessment Document is primarily aimed at providing a review framework where the existing support plan is significantly out of date and requires a major update. The Special Guardianship Assessment Document can then be used to inform and assist with the completion of the Support Plan.

3. Special Guardianship Annual Review Letter template

The letter can be used to assist of the yearly review of the support plan. It acts as a covering letter and states that if there are no significant changes in circumstances, by returning the letter and a signed support plan, the Special Guardian is agreeing that the plan has been reviewed.

4. Special Guardianship Audit Tool – Section One

The Special Guardianship Audit Tool – Section One is intended to assist local authority staff to check the quality and coverage of their overarching Special Guardianship Policy and then also provides a checklist for staff to ensure their Support Plan format captures key information. The second part of the Section One Audit Tool has then been translated into a checklist to be used to audit individual Support Plans. See below.

5. Special Guardianship Audit Tool – Section Two

The Special Guardianship Audit Tool – Section Two is aimed at assisting local authority staff to check the quality and coverage of Individual Special Guardianship Support Plans. The Section Two Audit Tools set out the factors and needs that an individual Support Plan should cover.

The two Special Guardianship Audit Tools are based on the findings and recommendations of the Local Government - Ombudsman's report 'Firm foundations: complaints about council support and advice for special guardians.

Contents

- 1. Special Guardianship – Support Plan..... 4
- 2. Special Guardian Assessment – For Support Plan Up-Date 18
- 3. Special Guardian Annual Review Letter Template..... 22
- 4. Section One – Audit Tool 23
- 5. Section Two – Audit Tool 26

1. Special Guardianship – Support Plan

Core Information – Child/Young Person			
Name			
Surname			
Date of Birth			
Gender			
Disability			
Ethnic Origin			
Religion			
Previous Legal Status, i.e. Section 20, Section 31.		Dates from - to	
NHS Number			
NI Number (if 16 and older)			
Who is the responsible Local Authority/Placing Authority?			
Who had Parental Responsibility for the child before the SG Order?			
<i>Within this section set out the essential information relating to the child/young person who is subject to the Special Guardianship Order. (Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)</i>			

Emergency and essential contacts	
Please list contact names and details to be used in a critical/emergency situation	
Birth Family – Named Contact	
Phone Number	
Local Authority – Contact Point/Name	
Phone Number	
A Special Guardian has a duty to inform the above named people in a critical situation such as, serious illness, accident or death of the child.	

Core Information – Special Guardian	
Name	
Surname	
Date of Birth	
Gender	
Ethnic Origin	
Relationship to the child/young person	
Name	
Surname	
Date of Birth	
Gender	
Ethnic Origin	
Relationship to the child/young person	
<i>Within this section set out the essential information relating to the Special Guardian, include information about all members of the household living in the house and other family members who regularly spend time in the house and/or have contact with the child/young person or provide support. Highlight any positive interactions/role models and any interactions that may create tensions or concerns. (Please delete this guidance once the plan is</i>	

completed)

Testimonial Guardian

Is there a testimonial guardian/s for the child/young person?	
Who are the testimonial guardian/s?	
Is there a will in place covering the child/young person?	

Core Information – Birth Family

Name	
Surname	
Date of Birth	
Relationship to the Child/Young Person	
<hr/>	
Name	
Surname	
Date of Birth	
Relationship to the Child/Young Person	
<i>Within this section set out the context/details of the child/young person's birth family and any significant extended family. (Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)</i>	

Other Family/Household Members (living in the same SGO household)

Name	Date of Birth	Gender	Relationship to the above Child/Young Person
Number of Household members			

Communication Needs (including language/literacy) regarding any of the people to be included in this plan	
Legal Status/Immigration Status information regarding any of the people to be included in this plan	

Other Significant People not Living in the Household AND People who will be able to provide support / respite care

Name	Contact details (phone / e-mail)	Relationship to the above child/young person

Housing/Accommodation	
Type of accommodation (<i>house/flat, private rented, housing association, council house, owned, other</i>)	
Number of bedrooms	
Does the child/young person have their own room?	
<i>Type of accommodation (private rented, housing association, council house, owned, other) – house/flat/other. Number of bedrooms. Does the child/young person have their own room? Are there any specific issues related to the accommodation for a) the special guardians, b) the child/young person. (Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)</i>	

Professional Relationships & Organisations involved (current and/or significant previous involvements. (Please list all significant professionals involved in the child's/young person's life (social worker, school, health etc.)					
Name & Designation/ Name of the organisation	Address	E-mail Address	Telephone Number	Date when involvement started	Date when involvement ended

Information about the Special Guardianship (Assessment Details and Outcomes)	
Date of SGO Assessment	
a) Child/Young Person	
b) Household	
c) Date SGO granted	
Attach/embed a copy of the SGO and assessment here.	A) <i>Copy of SGO (embed)</i> B) <i>Copy of Assessment (embed)</i>
What legal advice and guidance was given to the potential special guardian prior to confirming agreement to become a special guardian? Include legal advice that was given prior to the SGO being granted and any conditionality issues.	
Has the legal advice given been incorporated into the support plan?	
Has a Family Group Conference / Network Meeting taken place?	
Is there an extended family plan?	
<i>If no, please explain why the conference has not taken place, or if there are plans to organise this in the future. Are there plans to undertake a further conference/network meeting in the future.</i>	
<i>Within this section set out the date the assessment of the child/young person was started and finished, the date the assessment of the potential Special Guardian and family commenced and was finalised/approved. Set out the advice, guidance and legal advice the special guardian was given as part of the assessment and as part of the</i>	

process of establishing the Special Guardianship Order (if not fully set out in the separate assessment document). Make reference to the assessment document, the date the assessment was provided to the special guardian or embed the assessment document in the SGO Support Plan. (Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed).

Family Time / Contact Arrangements (with birth family/significant relationships)

Type of contact	
Who is this contact with?	
Frequency/duration/location	
Will contact be supervised?	
Who will supervise the contact if applicable?	
Are there any risk issues regarding family contact?	
Are there mediation services available to support setting up contact agreements?	
Is there a contact arrangement/agreement, or is there a need for one?	
Is there a contact order in place?	
Attach a copy of the contact order / arrangement / agreement?	
Are there any significant people in the child/ young person's life with whom the contact cannot be arranged now, but must be reviewed in the future? When will the review need to take place?	
<i>Set out any specific contact arrangements or agreements.</i>	
Date contact arrangements to be reviewed?	
<i>Set out the contact/ family time arrangements for the child/young person with their birth family (extended birth family) and how contact will be organised/managed, if supervision is required and who will supervise, set out any risk issues that may be relevant to the child/young person or the special guardians from the birth family and extended birth family and how these will be mitigated or managed. (Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)</i>	

Support to the Special Guardian in the Event of a Section 8 Application By Birth Parents

The local authority will indemnify the Special Guardian(s) in respect of the reasonable costs of opposing any future section 8 application by any birth parents.” This will be dependent on the local authority being in agreement with the Special Guardians opposition to the section 8 request and will also be dependent on the circumstances of the situation at the time.

Support Plan - Core Offer

Describe what services are available for special guardians (children/young people, carers and families) in your area & how these can be accessed or where information about these services can be found in the future.

Set out the Core SGO Offer (from the Responsible Authority)

Support available for the Special Guardian (support groups, advice line etc)?

Support available for the Child/Young Person (support groups/sibling groups etc)?

Within this section set out the core support provided by the local authority to all special guardians e.g.: Special Guardian support groups, Child/young person support groups, Sibling support groups, Advice/helpline, Training, Benefit/Finance Advice, Newsletters, Social events, Mentoring from other special guardians. (Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)

Support - Duty Service or Special Guardianship Support Team

Named support worker (if allocated)	
How to contact (telephone / email)	
When available?	
Who will coordinate the delivery of the support set out in this Plan?	
<i>Within this section set out the name of the SGO support worker and/or the arrangements for the special guardian to access duty support, phone number, e-mail, duty worker etc. (Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)</i>	

Special Guardianship Support Plan

Practical Support:

Within the sections below set out the nature of the practical support to be provided to the special guardian: What is provided, e.g. child care support, respite/short breaks etc. Also set out the nature of any practical support (ongoing/one-off activities) to be provided to/for the child/young person. What is their purpose, how long will they be provided, when will they cease, when will they be reviewed?

*Please set out the **financial support** in a separate section.
(Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)*

Family (SGO) & Social Relationships

Child's Needs <i>(from your assessment)</i>	Support/Service/Provision to Meet Assessed Need	Person/Agency Responsible for Meeting Need or coordinating	Timescale/duration/date will end/date to be reviewed
Carer's Needs <i>(from your assessment)</i>	Support/Service/Provision to Meet Assessed Need	Person/Agency Responsible for Meeting Need or coordinating	Timescale/duration/date will end/date to be reviewed

Within this section set out the relationships that exist between the child/young person and their special guardian family (family members) and their birth family and extended family. Also set out the nature of the child/young person's friendships and how they relate to family/friends and manage their relationships. (Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)

Identity

Children who cannot live with their birth family often need to develop a positive sense of their identity, based on an understanding of their life, including that of their family of origin. Life Story/History Work helps children and young people to make sense of growing up in multiple homes or families. It helps them to develop a coherent and accurate narrative of their lives and the lives of people closest to them. Children and young people will be able to start building an understanding and acceptance of who they are and their past experiences, and a healthy sense of self and feeling of well-being.

Child's Needs (Life Story work/Cultural understanding and identity)	Support/Service/Provision to Meet Need	Person/Agency Responsible for Meeting Need or coordinating	Timescale/duration/date will end/date to be reviewed

Within this section set out the nature of the child/young person's identity and attachment issues, i.e. Cultural, religious, ethnicity issues, sexuality and issues relating to being previously looked after and not living with their birth family. Is there information available to the child/young person about their birth family and extended family (if appropriate)? (Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)

Social and Emotional Well-being and Emotional Health and Development

Child's Needs	Support/Service/Provision to Meet Need	Person/Agency Responsible for Meeting Need or coordinating	Timescale/duration/date will end/date to be reviewed
Carer's Needs	Support/Service/Provision to Meet Need	Person/Agency Responsible for Meeting Need or coordinating	Timescale/duration/date will end/date to be reviewed

Within this section set out how the child/young person presents themselves in different situations: Within the family (special guardian and birth); Within school/college/training/employment; In the community; With peers/friends, Is the young person confident, assertive, sociable, introvert, self-contained, would they seek support if required etc. Include assessment of the nature of the child/young person's social and emotional development, i.e. age appropriate development, maturity, any additional or special needs, risk taking behaviour etc. Also consider what needs the child / young person is likely to have in the future. (Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)

Therapeutic Needs	
Has an assessment of need (therapeutic support) been completed?	Support/Service/Provision to Meet Need
What therapeutic support is already in place / has previously been provided (CAMHS/ Schools)	Support/Service/Provision to Meet Need
Has the adoption support fund been applied for? <i>(If a previously looked after child/young person)</i>	Support/Service/Provision to Meet Need

Physical Health			
Child's Needs	Support/Service/Provision to Meet Need	Person/Agency Responsible for Meeting Need or coordinating	Timescale/duration/ date will end/date to be reviewed
Carer's Needs	Support/Service/Provision to Meet Need	Person/Agency Responsible for Meeting Need or coordinating	Timescale/duration/ date will end/date to be reviewed
<p><i>Within this section (and the section above on Social and Emotional Well-being and Emotional Health and Development) set out the nature of any health/well-being needs of the child/young person e.g: Physical health and ability to highlight or identify health needs and address these, i.e. inform special guardian of need to visit doctor, dentist etc (consider age appropriate ability and maturity). Are there any additional/special needs, how do these impact on the child/young person, do they need reasonable adjustments/adaptions to ensure their needs are addressed.</i></p> <p><i>Has the child/young person experienced any activity that may be helpful to address via counselling? i.e., neglect, abuse, experience of domestic violence, substance misuse etc. if so, has any of these issues resulted in police involvement, the need for therapeutic support, a criminal injuries compensation authority application. List any agencies that are involved with the child/young person and their roles and responsibilities, e.g. CAMHS, School Counselling Service, specialist health input etc. Are there any hereditary health issues that may have an impact in the future?</i></p> <p><i>(Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)</i></p>			

Leisure, Hobbies, Sports and Positive Activities

Child's Needs	Support/Service/Provision to Meet Need	Person/Agency Responsible for Meeting Need or coordinating	Timescale/duration/ date will end/date to be reviewed
Carer's Needs	Support/Service/Provision to Meet Need	Person/Agency Responsible for Meeting Need or coordinating	Timescale/duration/ date will end/date to be reviewed

Within this section set out the activities and interests of the child/young person and how these activities will be promoted, e.g. does the authority have, such as a 'Passport to Leisure' scheme that provides children/young people and special guardians discounted and/or priority access to leisure and sports clubs/activities, Max Cards, KAL? Set out any universal service access opportunities, special guardianship core activities and activities specific to the individual child/young person/special guardians. Advise the carer how they can find out more or apply for the universal services. (Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)

Education

Identified Need or Issue	Support/Service/Provision to Meet Need	Person/Agency Responsible for meeting Need /Coordinating	Timescale/duration/ date will end/date to be reviewed

Pupil Premium Plus: *If the child/young person left care as a result of a Special Guardianship Order (SGO), they qualify for Pupil Premium Plus. To enable the school to apply, guardians must declare their child's SGO status directly to the school before the school completes the yearly January census. Parents and guardians must provide evidence, for example, a copy of the legal order, or a confirmation letter from the local authority which placed their child. The Pupil Premium Plus is paid to the school and must be spend on the previously looked after cohort.*

Has the Pupil Premium Plus been claimed for and how has it been used?

Education (Training/Employment if 16 and Older) Within this section set out the education, training, employment activity that the child/young person is undertaking. Name of school, college, training provider, and employer. What school year are they in, what type of school (mainstream, special, independent/non-maintained). Does the child/young person have any additional educational needs, do they receive Pupil Premium, SEN Support, are they subject to an Education, Health and Care Plan (when did the EHCP commence, what needs does it set out and what adjustments are provided/made for the child/young person). What is the nature of any special educational needs? (Does the child/young person attend a special school/mainstream school?) Who attends parent's evenings and events? Are there any specific liaison arrangements with the school/birth family regarding the child/young person? Are there any sibling related education activities? Does the child/young person have a pupil profile/passport? (Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)

Leaving Care Issues (if over 14)

One-Off Support			
On-Going Support			
Identified Need or Issue	Support/Service/Provision to Meet Need	Person/Agency Responsible for meeting Need or coordinating	Timescale/duration/ date will end/date to be reviewed

As a qualifying care leaver, children/young people are entitled to a Leaving Care Assessment of Need between the ages of 16 and 21/25. Any leaving care provision has to be based on the leaving care assessment of need; does the child/young person/special guardian understand how to request an assessment, if one is required? (Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)

Financial Support (specify if this support is for carer / child) - one-off / on-going support

One-Off Support	
-----------------	--

On Going Support	
------------------	--

Financial Support (general issues)			
Identified Need or Issue	Support/Service/Provision to Meet Need	Person/Agency Responsible for Meeting Need or Coordinating	Timescale/duration/date will end/date to be reviewed
Attach a copy of a SGO Offer Letter.			
What financial support has been provided / is available for legal costs?			
What financial advice / welfare benefits advice been provided for the carer? (date)			
Has a welfare benefit check/ assessment been undertaken? (date)			
Arrangements for the transfer of the Junior ISA (if CLA for over 52 weeks)?			
Has a Criminal Injuries Compensation Award Application been submitted (if so what are the arrangements for transferring the claim or award)?			
Are there any savings, inheritance, trust issues to consider, if so what the transfer arrangements are?			
<p><i>Within this section set out the nature of the financial support to be provided to the special guardian, e.g. level of any regular allowances and the level and nature of any one off payment (and their purpose) to the special guardian/s. Include any of the following: Respite/short breaks for the special guardians, specific funding for activities for the special guardians, adaptations to the home, transport allowances, holidays etc. Set out how long the allowances will be provided, when they will</i></p>			

cease and or when they will be reviewed. Set out what other income the special guardians have and the outcome of any means testing process. Set out the process for reviewing the financial arrangements should the circumstances of the family change.

Set out the nature of any financial support (ongoing/one-off activities) to be provided to/for the **child/young person**. What is their purpose, how long will they be provided, when will they cease, when will they be reviewed? (Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)

Does the child/young person have a Junior ISA (they would have needed to be a CLA for a period of 52 consecutive weeks), what is the level of the asset in the Junior ISA, does the special guardian/child/young person know how to access this when the child/young person reaches age 18. Are there any plans to add to the Junior ISA?

Were there grounds for making a CICA Application? Was one made? What was the level of the award, how will the award be managed? Does the special guardian/child/young person understand the implications of the award on any benefit entitlement? (Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)

Disability Benefits

Does the child/young person receive Disability Living Allowance (care and/or mobility element)?	
Is the Special Guardian the benefit appointee?	
Arrangements for the use of any disability benefit?	
<i>Disability Benefits (does the young person receive Disability Living Allowance [care and/or mobility element]) is the Special Guardian the benefit appointee. (Please delete this guidance once the plan is completed)</i>	

Support to Assist the Birth Family

Identified Need or Issue	Support/Service/Provision to Meet Need	Person/Agency Responsible for Meeting Need or coordinating	Timescale/duration/date will end/date to be reviewed

--	--	--	--

Child/Young Person (if appropriate)	
Views/Wishes and Feelings	
Signature	
Print Name	
Date	

Special Guardian	
Views/Wishes and Feelings	
I have read and agree with the content of this plan and services/support being offered.	
Signature	
Print Name	
Date	

Birth Family - Views/Wishes and Feelings

Local Authority Representative		
	Name	Role
Person Produced the Plan		
Person Authorising the Plan		
Signature		
Print Name		

Authorisation and Review Dates	
Date Plan Authorised	
Date Plan to be Reviewed	
Circumstances/changes that will trigger a review:	

2. Special Guardian Assessment – For Support Plan Up-Date

The information gathered through this assessment process should inform the full Special Guardian Support Plan. This assessment can be used if there is no current support plan in place or if the current support plan is considerably out of date and a fuller reassessment is required.

Core Information – Child/Young Person			
Name			
Surname			
Date of Birth			
Gender			
Disability			
Ethnic Origin			
Religion			
Previous Legal Status, i.e. Section 20, Section 31.		Dates from - to	
NHS Number			
NI Number (if 16 and older)			
Who is the responsible Local Authority/Placing Authority?			
Who had Parental Responsibility for the child before the SG Order?			

Key Contacts	
Birth Family – Named Contact	
Phone Number	
Local Authority – Contact Point/Name	
Phone Number	

Core Information – Special Guardian	
Name	
Surname	
Date of Birth	
Gender	
Ethnic Origin	
Relationship to the child/young person	
Additional (Partner/Husband/Wife)	
Name	
Surname	
Date of Birth	
Gender	
Ethnic Origin	
Relationship to the child/young person	

Core Information – Birth Family	
Name	
Surname	

Date of Birth	
Relationship to the Child/Young Person	
Additional (Partner/Husband/Wife)	
Name	
Surname	
Date of Birth	
Relationship to the Child/Young Person	

Other Family/Household Members (Living in the SG Household)			
Name	Date of Birth	Gender	Relationship to the above Child/Young Person
Number of Household Members			

Communication Needs (including language/literacy) regarding any of the people to be included in this plan	
Legal Status/Immigration Status information regarding any of the people to be included in this plan	

Other Significant People not Living in the Household AND People who will be able to provide support / respite care		
Name	Contact details (phone / e-mail)	Relationship to the above child/young person

Professional relationships (Please list all significant professionals involved in the child's life (social worker, school, health etc.)				
Designation	Name	Tel Number / email	Person working with (child, special guardian, birth parent, other)	Contributed to this assessment/plan (if not, please give reason why)
Social Worker				
Support Worker				
Teacher				
Additional				

Organisation Involved		
Organisation Name	Address	Tel Number / email

--	--	--

Special Guardianship Order / Plan details	
Date the Special Guardianship Order was granted	
Date that the last SG Support Plan was completed/reviewed	

Assessment of Need to Inform the Special Guardianship Support Plan
<p>What are the needs of the child / young person / SG family / Birth Family? What are the current issues, what is happening right now that is causing concern or has instituted the support plan review? What has triggered the assessment? <i>Presenting issues</i></p>
Identity
Family and Social Relationships
Social and Emotional Health & Development
Therapeutic Needs
Physical Health
Leisure, Hobbies, Sport and Pastimes
Education, Training, Employment (depending on age)
Leaving Care
Will a Financial Reassessment and Means Test be Undertaken (timescale)?
Financial Support Requested/Provided

Analysis, Comments and Outcome	
From - Social Worker	
Date	
From Supervising Manager	
Comments	

Views of all parties	
View of the child/young person regarding the assessment	

View of special guardian / parent and significant others on the assessment	
Child/Young Person I have read the support assessment – comment	
Special Guardian We/I have read the support assessment – Comment	
Birth Parent (if relevant) We/I have read the support assessment – Comment	
Observations/additional comments on any aspect of this report	
Date Assessment shared	

Signatures (Person/s Completing the Assessment)	
Signature	
Print Name	
Job Role	
Date	
Signature	
Print Name	
Job Role	
Date	

2nd January 2020

3. Special Guardian Annual Review Letter Template

One Adoption West Yorkshire/Local Authority
Address
Contact Details

Date

Special Guardian Details
Address

Reference (***Add Name of Child/Young Person and Date of Birth***)

Dear Special Guardian,

Please find enclosed the Special Guardianship Support Plan for ***Add Name***.

The Special Guardianship Support Plan enclosed was produced and agreed a year ago and therefore requires reviewing. If there have been no changes in the needs, support and services being provided to ***Add Name***, the Support Plan can be signed, dated and returned and will constitute a review and update of the arrangements for supporting ***Add Name***.

If there have been changes in the circumstances, support provided or the needs of ***Add Name***, then the Support Plan can be updated and adjusted accordingly. To arrange a more detailed update of the Support Plan please contact ***Add Details***.

Yours Sincerely

4. Section One – Audit Tool

SECTION ONE
Audit and Good Practice Tool and Checklist (based on the Ombudsman’s report ‘Firm foundations: complaints about council support and advice for special guardians)

The aim of this checklist and audit tool is to provide local authorities with a benchmarking framework to check the quality and coverage of their SGO policy and practice framework.

Special Guardianship Order Policy:

Does the local authority have an easy to read SGO policy (and leaflet) that provides information about the following?

1. The positive advantages of an SGO (positive permanence option) and issues to consider when contemplating an SGO;
2. Provides a timeline and critical decision timetable for prospective SG’s;
3. The provision of legal advice about becoming an SG;
4. Explains the assessment process;
5. The financial allowances available (a) for special guardians b) (who were previously foster carers));
6. One-off financial support that may be available for a) SG’s, b) child/young person
7. The a) means testing process, b) the means testing review and changes of circumstance timeline and process;
8. Practical support available for a) SG’s, b) child/young person;
9. The purpose of the SGO Support Plan;
10. The framework for reviewing the SGO Support Plan.

Auditing the SGO Support Plan (see section two checklist):

Does the SGO Support Plan reference the initial SG assessment?

Is there evidence of legal advice being offered/provided/funded for the SG and whether the offer has been taken up?

Cost of legal support?

The SGO Support Plan provides core and basic information about the SG Carers and the child/young person?

- Carers contact details and family make up,

- Child/young person's D.o.B. NHS number, health information, family background, important family and other important people's contact details etc,

Is there evidence of background information provided to the SG at the point of initial contact/enquiry?

Leaflet provided to prospective SG's about becoming an SG?

A flowchart provided about the process of becoming an SG, which includes key decisions, milestones and timescales?

Is there evidence of information provided about the positive opportunities that an SGO can provide for the child/young person and the prospective SG?

Is there evidence of information being provided about the changes created when a foster carer becomes an SG and the potential implications?

Is there evidence that the financial support available to the SG was explained?

- Allowances;
- Means testing;
- One off payments;
- Payments to the child/young person for support/activities/assessed needs.

Is there evidence that information was provided as to what would trigger a review of financial support and about the means testing process?

Is there evidence that a blank copy of the SGO Support Plan template and Guidance was provided to the SG and information was provided about what circumstances would trigger a review of the Support Plan and about the review process?

Is the Support Plan dated and signed and authorised:

- Social worker/local authority representative;
- Special Guardian;
- Child/young person;
- Advocate/other – please specify.

Does the Support Plan contain a review date and/or explain the process whereby the SG can request a review and/or what circumstances would trigger a review?

Does the Support Plan explain the support to be provided and an anticipated end date for each element of support and/or a review date?

Does the Support Plan explain the roles and responsibilities and expectations of the SG and the LA?

Does the Support Plan explain the different types of support to be provided, practical and financial, support? (Allowances, one of payments, respite, holidays, leisure cards, enhanced access to services, other [explain])?

Is there an explanation of who in the local authority authorises the plan, or if the plan is approved by a panel?

Does the SG have a carer file, is recording up to date?

Does the child/young person have a case file, is recording up to date?

For older children/young people – is there evidence that ‘capacity’ has been considered and that they understand what an SGO is?

Does the Support Plan set out the information about the transfer of the:

- Junior ISA/Child Trust Fund;
- A Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority application/award, if one has been made;
- Any savings accrued by the foster carer /local authority;
- Any identity or important documents.

Does the Support Plan explain how the SG can contact the local authority if they wish to request a review of the Support Plan if required and/or their, or the child/young person’s circumstances change?

Is there evidence that the initial draft of the Support Plan was sent to the SG for comment or changes and for approval?

Is there evidence that the means testing model was explained to the SG, what income is taken into account and how any changes of circumstances may lead to a review of the means tested allowances, and how long allowances are provided?

Is the local authority SGO policy dated and does it contain a date when it will be reviewed?

Special Guardianship - Audit Tool/Checklist

John Short

2nd January 2020

5. Section Two – Audit Tool

SECTION TWO

The aim of this audit tool is to assist staff to check the quality and comprehensive nature of the information being provided within the individual Special Guardianship Order, Support Plan

	Question	Yes	No	Notes
1	Does the SGO Support Plan reference the initial SG assessment?			
2	Is there evidence of legal advice being offered for the SG?			
3	Has the legal advice been provided for the SG?			
4	Has the SG taken up the offer?			
5	Has legal advice been funded?			
6	What was the cost of legal support?			
7	Does the SGO Support plan include:			
7.1	Core and basic information about the SG Carers and the child/young person?			
7.2	Carers contact details?			
7.3	The family make up?			
7.4	Child/young person's Date of Birth?			
7.5	Child/young person's NHS number?			
7.6	Child/young person's Health information?			
7.7	Child/young person's Family background?			
7.8	Important family contact details?			

	Question	Yes	No	Notes
7.9	Other important people's contact details?			
8	Is there evidence of background information provided to the SG at the point of initial contact/enquiry?			
9	Has a leaflet been provided to prospective SG's about becoming an SG?			
10	Has a flowchart been provided to the carer about the process of becoming an SG, which includes key decisions, milestones and timescales?			
11	Is there evidence of information provided about the positive opportunities that an SGO can provide for the child/young person and the prospective SG?			
12	Is there evidence of information being provided about the changes from being a foster carer to becoming a SG and the potential implications?			
13	Is there evidence that the financial support available to the SG was explained?			
14	Did the financial advice include:			
14.1	Allowances?			
14.2	Means testing?			
14.3	One off payments?			
14.4	Payments to the child/young person for support/activities/assessed needs?			
14.5	Information about as to what would trigger a review of financial support?			
14.6	Information about the means testing process?			
15	Is there evidence that a copy of the SGO Support Plan template was provided to the SG?			
16	Was information provided about what circumstances would trigger a review of the Support Plan?			

	Question	Yes	No	Notes
17	Was information provided about the support plan review process?			
18	Is the Support Plan dated and signed and authorised:			
18.1	Social worker/local authority representative?			
18.2	Special Guardian?			
18.3	Child/young person?			
18.4	Advocate/other – please specify?			
19	Does the Support Plan contain a review date and/or explain the process whereby the SG can request a review and/or what circumstances would trigger a review?			
20	Does the Support Plan explain the support to be provided?			
21	Does the Support Plan include an anticipated end date for each element of support and/or a review date?			
22	Does the Support Plan explain the roles and responsibilities and expectations of the SG?			
23	Does the Support Plan explain the roles and responsibilities and expectations of the Local Authority?			
24	Does the Support Plan explain the different types of support to be provided, practical and financial, support?			
25	Are the following areas explained:			
25.1	Allowances?			
25.2	One of payments?			
25.3	Respite?			
26.4	Holidays?			
25.5	Leisure cards?			
25.6	Enhanced access to services?			
25.7	Other, explain?			
26	Is there an explanation of who in the local authority authorises the plan, or if the plan is approved by a panel?			

	Question	Yes	No	Notes
27	Does the SG have a carer file?			
27.1	Is the recording in the SG carer's file up to date?			
28	Does the child/young person have a case file?			
28.1	Is recording of the child/ young person's file up to date?			
29	For older children/young people:			
29.1	Is there evidence that 'capacity' has been considered and that they understand what an SGO is?			
29.2	Does the Support Plan set out the information about the transfer of the:			
29.2.1	Junior ISA?			
29.2.2	Child Trust Fund?			
29.2.3	A Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority application/award, if one has been made?			
29.2.4	Any savings accrued by the foster carer /local authority?			
29.2.5	Any identity or important documents?			
30	Does the Support Plan explain how the SG can contact the local authority if they wish to request a review of the Support Plan if required and/or their or the child/young person's circumstances change?			
31	Is there evidence that the initial draft of the Support Plan was sent to the SG for comment or changes and for approval?			
32	Is there evidence that the was explained to the SG, means testing model what income is taken into account and how any changes of circumstances may lead to a review of the means tested allowances, and how long allowances are provided?			
33	Is the local authority SGO policy dated and does it contain a date when it will be reviewed?			

2nd January 2020 - Eva Booth & John Short