



One minute guide

Kinship Support Service



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What is kinship care?

When children are brought up by members of their extended families, friends or other people who are connected with them we call this 'kinship care'. This happens for different reasons and with a variety of different arrangements. These carers are referred to as '**kinship carers**', '**kinship parents**', '**friends and family carers**' or '**connected persons**.' Many people become kinship carers including grandparents, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles or other relatives. In some circumstances children may live with somebody outside the family but closely connected to them such as a former foster carer or close family friend.

Some common reasons for children living in kinship care include: their parents struggling with drug or alcohol misuse or their own mental health needs, parents not being able to meet the day-to-day needs of their children, domestic abuse or the death of a parent. A kinship arrangement may be permanent or temporary. Sometimes the arrangement is made by the local authority as social workers try to support children to remain living with their wider birth family where it is safe to do so. To learn more watch this helpful video: [What is kinship care?](#)

What kinship arrangements are there?

- Private arrangements made within the family
- Child arrangement order (CAO) or special guardianship order (SGO)
- Friends and family foster carers
- Private fostering (supported by a Nottinghamshire family support and safeguarding team)

*For more information about these arrangements and orders ask to see our one minute guide to **Kinship Arrangements and Legal Orders** or visit [one minute guides | Nottinghamshire County Council Intranet](#).*

What is the Kinship Support Service?

In Nottinghamshire, we believe in the power of family and encourage kinship care as a positive way to support children without them needing to come into care. We have a dedicated team across the county comprising of social workers, welfare rights officers, family workers, and support staff who are here to help kinship families. We work closely with other professionals for example from health, education and housing services, and social care to make sure families get the help they need. We also partner with the charity [Kinship](#) who offer additional support, groups of experts by experience and training to help our kinship carers build strong and stable families.

The Kinship Support Service can offer:

- Telephone advice and guidance
- Support from our skilled and caring team for what you need, when you need it
- Review of special guardianship order support plans for example when there is a change in circumstances
- Training for kinship carers and training and guidance to professionals
- Support with contacting the Nottinghamshire virtual school and educational psychology service for support around education issues
- Life story work
- Kinship and contact service drop in for advice and guidance around family time
- Support for carers from experts by experience and connecting to support groups including those run by Hetty's Charity
- Activities for kinship children and families including an annual celebration in October
- Access to the [adoption and special guardianship support fund](#) subject to eligibility
- Benefits support, financial advice and review of kinship payments
- The Service also helps runs a Youth group (taking place in Mansfield).

Our practice standards and consultation:

We value the voices of our kinship families in Nottinghamshire and do our best to always listen to their experiences to help shape the support we offer. Kinship carers/kinship parents are invited to attend the Kinship Forum which brings together experts by experience and professionals. The Forum, which is jointly run by a kinship parent and workers, is held every two months to gather feedback and ideas and involve kinship families in shaping our service. We are keen to improve what we offer so that the right support is there when it's needed the most. We also ask for feedback when our involvement comes to an end to help us provide the best service we can.

How can people access support from the Kinship Support Service?

A formal referral is not needed. You can get in touch by phone or email during office hours and the team will listen carefully and respond in a way that we all agree is most helpful to you.

To find out more please contact our Kinship Support Service by calling 0115 804 1407 or emailing kinshipsupport@nottsc.gov.uk. We aim to respond to your call or email within 7 working days.

For out-of-hours (non-emergency) support please call 0800 085 8995. The service operates from 6.00pm - 10.00pm Monday to Friday and 10.00am until 10.00pm weekends and bank holidays.

People can also [sign up to our monthly newsletter on Microsoft forms](#) to find out more.



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