

## **LBBB Kinship Local Offer**

Updated in January 2026 to reflect the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill (2025) and the Kinship Care Statutory Guidance (2024)

### **Introduction**

Kinship carers play an extraordinary role in the lives of children who cannot live with their parents. You provide love, stability and belonging at moments of crisis, and we recognise the lifelong commitment this often represents.

This Kinship Local Offer sets out the support available to you in Barking and Dagenham. It has been shaped by national guidance, local services, and — importantly — the voices of kinship carers themselves.

Under the new Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act, we have a legal duty to consult kinship carers, children and families when developing or revising this offer. We are committed to co-producing future updates with you.

### **Who Is a Kinship Carer?**

A kinship carer is someone who looks after a child who cannot live with their parents. This may be due to family breakdown, illness, safeguarding concerns or other circumstances.

Kinship carers may be:

- Grandparents
- Aunts, uncles or siblings
- Other relatives
- Family friends or connected persons

### **Types of Kinship Care**

Different legal arrangements come with different rights and responsibilities:

- Special Guardianship Orders (SGO)
- Child Arrangements Orders (CAO)
- Family and Friends Foster Care
- Private Fostering
- Informal or private arrangements

If you are unsure which arrangement applies to you, our Kinship Support Office can help (020 8227 5555 and email: [kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk)).



## 1. Information and Advice

Dedicated Kinship Support Office

Personalised guidance on legal processes, benefits, education, contact arrangements and support services.

✉ [kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk)

☎ 0208 227 5555 (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm)

## Workshops and Information Sessions

Regular sessions covering:

- Managing challenging behaviour
- Navigating the education system
- Understanding trauma and attachment
- Legal processes and entitlements

## Specialist Intervention Service

Support for children aged 10+ including:

- Family contact support
- Family group conferencing
- Restorative interventions
- Mediation
- Therapeutic input

## Independent National Support

- Kinship.org – national charity for kinship carers
- Family Rights Group – legal and social care advice
- PAC-UK – therapeutic and educational support
- CoramBAAF – resources for permanent care

## 2. Financial Support

Our Kinship Support Officer can help you understand and access financial entitlements, including:

### Benefits and Allowances

- Child Benefit
- Universal Credit (child element)
- Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP)



**Foundations** also provide support with caring and mentoring children and young people through adversity - [Events - Foundations](#)

### **Tax and National Insurance Guidance**

**Links to HMRC training, qualifying care relief, and NI credits for carers.**

#### **Local Support**

- Advice on housing and council tax
- 25% single-occupancy council tax discount
- Discretionary grants (e.g., school uniform, essential items)
- One-off settling-in grant for essential equipment (bed, wardrobe, car seat etc.)

#### **Independent Financial Advice**

- The Fostering Network
- FosterTalk
- Turn2Us

### **3. Emotional and Wellbeing Support**

#### **Peer Support Groups**

Regular sessions for kinship carers to share experiences and receive emotional support.

#### **Training and Workshops**

##### **Examples include:**

- Life story work
- Managing contact
- Understanding trauma
- Supporting children at school
- Financial support for kinship families
- Preparing for sensitive conversations

#### **Mental Health Support**

- Access to CAMHS
- Therapeutic support referrals
- Early Help Programme for families with children under 5

### **4. Health**

Jigsaw – Children in Care Health Service

Annual or bi-annual health assessments, referrals and ongoing support for children in care aged 0–18.

<https://www.nelft.nhs.uk/children-in-care-service-barking-and-dagenham>

Subwize (Drug and Alcohol Support)



Free, confidential support for young people aged 25 and under affected by substance use.

☎ 0300 303 4613

✉ [subwize@viaorg.uk](mailto:subwize@viaorg.uk)

### 0–19 Healthy Child Programme

Health visiting, school nursing, developmental reviews and targeted support. Provided by NELFT.

#### Accessing NHS Services

- Register with a GP (no ID or proof of address required)
- Find a dentist
- Find an optician
- Find local mental health services

#### SeeAbility

Guides for children with learning disabilities, autism and sight loss covering:

- Oral health
- Eye care
- Hearing care

## 5. Training and Development

We offer a range of training opportunities for kinship carers, including:

- Parenting techniques
- Trauma and attachment
- Managing contact
- SEND support
- Online courses and local parenting programmes

To book training please click on the below link:

[Free training and events for kinship carers | Kinship](#)

#### Useful guides about providing care through adversity

- [Kinship Care Guide](#)
- [Parenting Through Adversity 0–10](#)
- [Parenting Through Adversity 11–18](#)
- [Parenting Disabled Children and Young People](#)
- [Mentoring and Befriending](#)

## 6. Education and Employment Support

School Admissions and SEND Support

Help with:

- Applying for school places



- Understanding EHCPs
- Accessing additional support

### **Aspire Virtual School**

Advice and signposting for young people in kinship care, including education pathways and careers guidance.

[Home - Aspire Virtual School](#)

### **SEND Local Offer**

Information on services for children with SEND in Barking and Dagenham.

[Barking and Dagenham SEND Local Offer](#)

## **7. Activities**

We help families access activities that support wellbeing and development.

### **Future Youth Zone**

Over 20 activities per session, plus wellbeing and leadership support.

[Home - Future Youth Zone](#)

### **New Town Culture**

Creative and cultural activities for young people.

[✉ Sioned.Pennant@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:Sioned.Pennant@lbbd.gov.uk)

[About New Town Culture](#)

### **Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) Programme**

Free holiday activities for children eligible for free school meals.

[✉ hafprogramme@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:hafprogramme@lbbd.gov.uk)

[Free holiday activities | London Borough of Barking and Dagenham](#)

## **8. Legal Support**

**Our Kinship Support Officer can provide guidance on:**

- Special Guardianship Orders
- Child Arrangements Orders
- Private fostering
- Contact arrangements
- Rights and responsibilities

## **9. Specialist Support and Resources for Children in Kinship Care**

### **Enhanced Offer for Care Leavers**

Young people aged 16–25 may be entitled to support if they were looked after between ages 16 and 18.

Drop-In Sessions and Support Groups

Regular parent and Special Guardian support groups.



Peer-Led WhatsApp SG Group

A community-run group for Special Guardians (not moderated by LBBD).

External Specialist Support

- [PAC-UK - adoption & special guardianship support - Family Action](#)
- [Foster Care Support | Fostering Support | FosterTalk](#)
- [Kinship care: statutory guidance for local authorities](#)
- [Talking therapies - NHS](#)

## 10. Consultation and Co-Production (New Legal Requirement)

Under the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act, LBBD must consult:

- Kinship carers
- Children in kinship care
- Families affected

**We will meet this duty by:**

- Running quarterly consultation groups
- Offering online surveys
- Holding annual co-production events
- Involving kinship carers in reviewing and updating this Local Offer

You can register your interest in taking part by emailing:

 [kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk)

Your input helps shape the future of kinship care in our community.

This Kinship Local Offer reflects our commitment to supporting kinship carers and ensuring positive outcomes for the children in their care. Thank you for the incredible difference you make in the lives of children.

**Joanne Laird-Jeffrey**  
Service Manager for Permanence

