

**Barking &
Dagenham**

CARES



LBBD Kinship Local Offer



Introduction

We recognise the invaluable role that kinship carers play in the lives of children who cannot live with their parents. Kinship carers provide love, stability, and a sense of belonging, often stepping in during challenging circumstances. This Kinship Local Offer outlines the support and services available to kinship carers in line with the Kinship Care Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (October 2024).

Our commitment is to ensure that kinship carers feel supported, informed, and empowered to meet the needs of the children in their care.

Who Is a Kinship Carer?

A kinship carer is someone who looks after a child who cannot live with their parents, usually due to family circumstances or safeguarding concerns. Kinship carers are often grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, or family friends.

Types of kinship care

There are different types of kinship care. It could be:



Carers' rights, responsibilities and the support they can get will depend on the type of arrangement.

Our Support Offer

1. Information and Advice

Access to a dedicated Kinship Support Officer who provides tailored guidance.

kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk

Duty Number 9am – 5pm: 0208 227 5555



A kinship carer is someone who looks after a child who cannot live with their parents, usually due to family circumstances or safeguarding concerns.

Regular information sessions and workshops covering topics such as managing challenging behaviour, navigating the education system, and understanding legal processes.

Kinship.org is a national charity that provides a range of advice, support and guidance to kinship carers.

Specialist Intervention Service – this service offers advice regarding family contact, family support work, family group conferencing, restorative interventions, mediation and a therapy service. This is specifically for children aged 10 years+ and they will also look at the impact on the other siblings. Please contact our kinship support officer for further information **kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk**

Becoming a kinship carer - Kinship – this guide has been written in partnership with kinship carers to offer links to detailed information and further support that will strengthen, empower, and equip you for the journey you are on.

Looking after someone else's child provides government guidance on support and benefits you can get if you're looking after someone else's child.

Family Rights Group is a charity that advises families whose children are involved with children's services. They have a confidential advice service for parents and family and friends carers.

PAC-UK provides specialist independent advice, counselling, training and educational advice for those affected by adoption, Special Guardianship and other forms of permanent care.

CoramBAAF is a charity dedicated to improving lives for children and young people in care.

2. Financial Support

Our Kinship Support officer can offer guidance on accessing financial entitlements, including:

Child Benefit and the child element to Universal Credit.

Explore other benefits including Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments(PIP), if applicable to the child.

Financial support will depend on your current circumstances and type of Kinship Care provided.

All kinship carers may use this link to ascertain their benefit entitlement.

Financial support and benefits for kinship carers - Kinship

This is HMRC tax training: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-and-support-if-youre-self-employed>

Additionally, the Fostering Network and Fostering Talk also have their own financial support advisors, who are independent from LBBD.

<https://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/advice-information/finances>

<https://www.fostertalk.org/foster-carer-tax/>



Turn2us are a national charity, and they may offer you support with your finances. It is your decision if they wish to contact them. (We do not endorse them as a local authority, they are an independent resource).

Get support with claiming benefits and grants | Turn2us

For those with just one adult in your home, you will be entitled to Council Tax relief – at 25% discount:

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-council-tax-discount>

Finally, the Government has launched a cost-of-living advice page – this may prove useful for those who link with Care Leavers or who have young people Staying Put preparing to leave care: **<https://www.gov.uk/cost-of-living>**

You may be eligible for a discretionary grant for essential items such as school uniform.

We can give advice around housing and council tax where needed.

We may provide a one off settling in grant to ensure you have all of the essential equipment you need for the child i.e. bed, wardrobe, car seat etc.

Please contact our kinship support officer for further information **kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk**



3. Emotional and Wellbeing Support

Access to a peer support group for kinship carers, offering a safe space to share experiences and advice,

- ☐ Life Story training
- ☐ Dealing with the emotional challenges of being a Kinship carer
- ☐ Understanding the effects of substance mis use on kinship families
- ☐ Managing contact for kinship families
- ☐ Supporting your child at school
- ☐ Understanding trauma and attachment in children
- ☐ Dealing with emotional challenges as a Kinship carer



- ❑ Financial support for kinship families
- ❑ Preparing for sensitive conversations with Kinship children
- ❑ Overview or EHCP and SEND processes
- ❑ Managing contact in Kinship families

More information is available at: **Free training and events for kinship carers | Kinship:**

Information on mental health support services, including referrals to local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Access to therapeutic support.

Early Help Programme – This is support for families with a child under five and it includes targeted support to meet the individual needs of your family, someone to talk to, ensure your child gets the best start in life, behaviour strategies for SEND families and helping families connect with their community.

If you would like more information, please email: **carers@carerscentre.org.uk** Tel: **0208 593 4422**

Please contact our kinship support officer for further information **kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk**



4. Health

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

The Children in Care service provide health support for those children / young people who are in care aged between 0-18 years, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. All Children in Care are offered annual / bi-annual health assessments, where their health needs are discussed, referrals to other services made, if necessary and support is provided.

Barking and Dagenham – Subwize

If you are worried about someone's drug or alcohol use, Subwize can offer free, friendly and non-judgmental support for you or your family. They work with anyone 25 years old or under who live or study in Barking and Dagenham.

Contact: Phone: **0300 303 4613** Email: **subwize@viaorg.uk**

Barking and Dagenham Children and Families Health Service | NELFT NHS Foundation Trust – The 0 to 19 Healthy Child Programme in Barking and Dagenham is a health care programme that is offered to families/carers with children from antenatal to 19 years of age.



Find your GP - Anyone in England can register with a GP surgery to access NHS services. It's free to register. You do not need proof of address or immigration status, ID or an NHS number.

GP surgeries are usually the first contact if you have a health problem. They can treat many conditions and give health advice. They can also refer you to other NHS services.

Find your Dentist – Use this link to find your nearest dentist.

NHS Opticians and sight tests – Use this link to find your nearest opticians.

How to find local mental health services – Use this link to find out what is available in your local area.

SeeAbility **Home | SeeAbility** – This organisation specialises in supporting people who have learning disabilities or autism, who may also have sight loss, to live ambitious lives and achieve things they never thought possible. They have created a range of useful parent's guides:

- Oral health and dental care for children with a learning disability, autism or both
- Eye care for children with a learning disability, autism or both
- Hearing care for children with a learning disability, autism or both

Barking and Dagenham – Useful link for accessing a wide range of NHS services

5. Training and Development

We provide various workshops on topics such as:

- ❑ Parenting techniques for kinship carers.
- ❑ Understanding trauma and attachment.

Managing contact with birth parents.

Free access to online training courses and local parenting programmes.

For further information about the training offered and to book yourself onto training please email us at kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk and we will send you the relevant training course information.



6. Education and Employment Support

We can support with school admissions and securing additional support for children with special needs.

Home - Aspire Virtual School

The Aspire Virtual School can offer advice and signposting to those families whose young people are with them under a special guardianship order or other forms of kinship care.

To support you and help you decide on how to pursue your dream career, **[click here to download a guide](#)**, that will point you in the right direction and help you transition from secondary school to University to College.

Contact us - Aspire Virtual School

Home - Barking and Dagenham SEND Local Offer

This resource is for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities and their families and it provides useful information about services available with contact information.



7. Activities

Support with accessing extracurricular activities to promote children's development and integration.

Home - Future Youth Zone

They have a dedicated team of youth workers who are committed to helping young people discover their passion and purpose and to supporting them through the challenges young people face today. Every session offers members more than 20 activities to explore and discover, to create their own future: from boxing to beatboxing, cooking to climbing and nail art to fine art.

But your Future's so much more than that. We are about inclusivity, developing the leaders of the future, making members' mental health a priority, and supporting parents. We believe every young person can become the best version of themselves – if they believe in themselves. For more information please **[click this link](#)**.

New Town Culture – This is a project providing various activities for young people living within the borough.

Contact Sioned Pennant to find out more about any activities that your young person might be eligible to attend: **Sioned.Pennant@lbdd.gov.uk**

Free holiday activities please **[click here for more information](#)**



The Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) Programme is free to children and young people who live or go to school in Barking and Dagenham and are eligible for benefit-related free school meals, with paid places available for everyone.

Booking is essential on all activities so book early to avoid disappointment.

For any queries, please contact: hafprogramme@lbbd.gov.uk

Funded by the Department of Education

8. Legal Support

Our Kinship support officer can support with advice around navigating legal orders, including Child Arrangements Orders, Special Guardianship Orders, and fostering arrangements. You can find out more about low cost and free legal advice from:

Home - Support Through Court

Home – University House - Legal Advice Centre

Mary Ward Legal Centre

Please contact our kinship support officer for further information kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk



9. Specialist Support and Resources for Children in Kinship Care

Enhanced Local Offer to Care Leavers

Your young person is a qualifying care leaver if: they are aged between 16-25 and were looked after by Children's Services for a period of time between their 16th and 18th birthday.

How to Access Support

Contact your local Kinship Support Team:

Tel: **0208 227 5555**

Email: kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk



Kinship Newsletter

We also do a bi-monthly newsletter which is packed with up to date information, resources and local activities and events. Email the kinship team if you would like to be added to the newsletter mailing list

Dates of LBBD Parent Support Groups

We hold support group meetings for parents every in February, May, August and November. Please contact kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk for more details.

Dates of LBBD Kinship Forum

We hold forums for kinship carers every two months that are carer led and enable a safe space to receive peer support as well as provide valuable feedback to the Local Authority about how to improve the service.

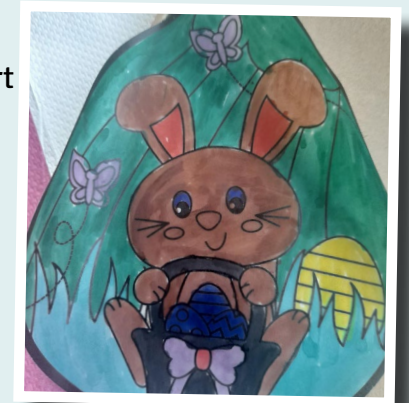
Upcoming Kinship Events will include:

- Barking Splash Park (summer holidays)
- Southend Adventure Island (summer holidays)
- Craft activity day (Festive event)

Please contact kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk for more details.

WhatsApp Kinship group to promote activities and support available to kinship families.

If you would like to join please contact kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk who will get you added to the group.



Feedback and Development

We are committed to improving our Kinship Local Offer. If you have suggestions, feedback, or concerns, please contact us at kinship.adoptionteam@lbbd.gov.uk and complete the relevant feedback form.

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

