

One Minute Guide

Kinship Care

What is kinship care?

Kinship care is any situation in which a child is being raised in the care of a friend or family member who is not their parent. Kinship care arrangements can be **formal or informal**, temporary or longer term. Kinship carers can be grandparents, uncles, aunts, older brothers and sisters or other adults who have a connection to the child, such as neighbours or family friends. Kinship carers are sometimes called family and friends carers.

If a child is living with a wider family member under one of these arrangements, it does not always mean they have a Social Worker, or involvement from Children's Social Care.

There are a wide range of arrangements that are considered kinship care. You can find a full explanation on the Family Rights Group website [Kinship care - Family Rights Group \(frg.org.uk\)](https://www.frg.org.uk)

The types of arrangements you may hear of are:

1. Private family arrangements

A close family member who does not hold parental responsibility, raises the child and

- The local authority has had no major role in making the arrangement for the child; and
- Matters have not been considered by the Family Court.

2. Private fostering

Someone who is not a close relative of the child and is not already approved as a foster carer looks after the child for 28 days or more (as per section 66(1)(a) and (b) of the Children Act 1989). Child must be under the age of 16, unless they have a disability.

3. 'Lives with' child arrangements order

Under this court order the child will live with the kinship carer named in the order and the carer will share [parental responsibility](#) with the parents.

4. Special guardianship

A special guardianship order is a court order that says a child will live permanently with someone (who is not their parent) until they are 18. A special guardianship order gives the special guardian 'enhanced' parental responsibility for the child. This gives them the authority to make all major decisions about the child's upbringing and care. The order restricts the birth parents' rights but does not permanently end them.

5. Kinship foster care

Sometimes a kinship care arrangement involves a child becoming looked after by children's services, but with the child living with a relative or friend who becomes a foster carer for them. This might be under a care order, or under a voluntary arrangement. The carer is known as a kinship foster carer.

6. Adoption

Adoption is unusual in kinship care arrangements because it changes the legal relationship with the child's parents. They legally cease to be the child's parents.

If you are worried about a child who you believe may be being cared for in a kinship arrangement, please follow local processes and contact Portsmouth MASH directly on:

- 0845 6710271 / 02392 688793
- [Worried about a child - Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Partnership \(portsmouthscp.org.uk\)](https://www.portsmouthscp.org.uk)