



worcestershire
countycouncil

Family and Friends Care



Introduction

Most children are brought up by one or more of their parents, but some are brought up by members of their extended families, friends or other people connected with them. It has been estimated that between 200,000 to 300,000 children and young people are cared for in these circumstances. These arrangements are under a range of different legal circumstances and are referred to in this policy as “family and friends care” although they are sometimes referred to as kinship care arrangements.

Family and friends carers play a unique role in enabling children and young people to remain with people they know and trust if they cannot, for whatever reason, live with their parents. These children and young people may or may not be looked after by the local authority, or even known to it. The majority of the relatives who provide care are grandparents, aunts and uncles, or sometimes others such as older siblings.

Many children and young people who live in family and friends care do well in life, but others are vulnerable and may fail to achieve good outcomes. Many family and friends carers both want and need support to enable them to meet the needs of the children and young people they care for.

This policy sets out how we, along with our partner agencies intend to deliver effective services to children and young people who are living with family members or friends, based on an assessment of their need, in any of the following circumstances

- an informal arrangement with a close relative
- an informal arrangement with friends or other family member from the extended family which lasts for a period of less than 28 days
- as a private fostering arrangement
- as a looked after child placed with foster carers
- under a Residence Order or Special Guardianship Order, or
- an arrangements which may lead to an Adoption Order.

The Head of Safeguarding Services to Children and Young People will have overall responsibility for this policy which will be regularly reviewed and made widely available in a number of different formats.

The Head of Safeguarding Services to Children and Young People will work with partner agencies to look at their responsibilities towards children and young people living with family and friends carers and ensure that they are proactive in meeting their needs.

They will ensure that local authority staff have an understanding of the issues facing children, young people and family and friends carers and their duty towards them. They will work with partner agencies to ensure that their staff, including those working in universal services such as day care providers, schools and colleges, are also aware of the challenges which children, young people and families may face and have the knowledge to signpost to the relevant services.

Worcestershire County Council's Family and Friends Care policy sets out the services available to children and young people living with family and friends carers within Worcestershire. Many children and young people living with family and friends carers may only need to access universal services and information about these is provided by Worcestershire County Council's Family Information Service. Some children and young people may need to access more targeted and specialist service and this policy sets out the services available and the criteria for accessing them.

Values and principles

At the centre of this policy is the principle that the welfare of the child or young person is of paramount importance.

It is based on the underlying principles of the 1989 Children's Act and the key principle that children and young people should be enabled to live within their families unless this is not consistent with their welfare.

It seeks to promote permanence for children and young people by enabling children and young people who cannot live with their parents to remain with their extended family and friends where appropriate as a better alternative than growing up in the care of the local authority. By permanence it means the framework of emotional, physical and legal conditions that give a child or young person a sense of security, continuity, commitment and identity.

The policy is further underpinned by the principle that support should be based on the needs of the child or young person rather than merely their legal status. Each child or young person should be valued as individuals and their needs arising from gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexual orientation recognised.

It sees children and young people as active participants whose wishes and feelings should be taken into account when adults are making decisions about them.

As part of the development of this policy children and young people living with family and friends carers and their carers were consulted. Carers supported the principle that support should be according to assessed need and not legal status. They asked for clearer information on what services were available to them and the children and young people they cared for and how these services could be accessed. Carers, children and young people enjoyed the

opportunity to meet together and were interested in support groups for family and friends carers and the children and young people placed with them.

Why Family and Friends Care?

Although most of the research about family and friends care in the United Kingdom focuses on the placement of looked after children with family and friends foster carers, the research evidence, although not conclusive, is broadly supportive of family and friends care as a viable option for many children and young people.

Security of attachment and the continuity of care are important factors in children's long-term well being and family and friends have the capacity to deliver this. Children and young people are generally reported to feel secure, happy and integrated into the family and family and friends carers demonstrate a high level of commitment with strong bonds to the children and young people they care for.

Research that has looked at the stability of placements for children placed with family and friends carers suggests a complex picture but the weight of evidence still supports the conclusion that children placed with family and friends remain in placement longer and have fewer moves than children placed with non- related foster carers.

In terms of a child's well being, although information is limited, what is available is broadly positive. Children placed with family and friends appear to do as well as those placed with unrelated foster carers in terms of their health, education, emotional and behavioural development.

Family and friends carers are often uncertain about what help is available and how to access it. Research suggests that better support services may prevent the breakdown of some placements and lead to better outcomes for children and young people.

Few children or young people want to be looked after by the local authority, most would prefer to live with their parents with support and when this is not possible they would wish to live with members of their extended family.

The Legal Context

The Children Act 1989 sets out a number of duties and responsibilities for the Local Authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need living within their area. There is no general duty to assess all arrangements where children are living with family and friends carers but the Local Authority does have a duty to assess when it appears that services may be needed to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child or young person.

Children in need may live with family or friend carers under a variety of different legal arrangements, both formal and informal. Some children will become "looked after" by the Local Authority whether they are accommodated with parental consent or the result of a court order. Set out below are the different legal circumstances and the Local Authority's powers and duties in relation to each option.

Family and Friends Carers (Child not looked after)

Informal Family Arrangement and Children in Need

A child's parents or a child with the consent of its birth parents may choose to live informally with a person to whom they have a close relationship. The child's birth parents remain wholly responsible for their child in these circumstances, including ensuring that they are safe and their needs are being met (including financial).

If the child is not assessed as a Child In Need there is no reason for the Worcestershire County Council to intervene or be informed of such arrangements.

Worcestershire County Council may provide support or services to the child or carers if the child is assessed as a Child In Need. A child in need is defined in Section 17 (10) of the Children Act 1989 as a child who is disabled or who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services by the local authority.

Following an assessment of the child's needs by Safeguarding and Services to Children and Young People a range of support services may be provided. These include

- Counselling, advice and information
- Help to maintain the relationship between the child and the carer through training, respite and mediation,
- Help with contact arrangements,
- Direct work with the child,
- Financial support dependent on a financial assessment for equipment, activities or other expenses relating to the needs of the child.

Financial support will depend on assessment of the needs of the child or young person and a financial assessment of the carers. The expectation will be that carers have accessed other allowances to which they are entitled such as Child Benefit or Tax Credits.

Team Managers who hold responsibility for the management of a child or young person case can agree small amounts of funding for equipment, activities or other expenses relating to the needs of a child as one of payments or payments over a short period of time. Higher amounts of funding or payments over a longer period are agreed by Service Managers or the Head of Service for Safeguarding and Services to Children and Young People.

Private Fostering

If a child lives with any person who is not a close relative (by blood, marriage or civil partnership – grandparent, aunt/uncle or brother or sister) for 28 days or more, unless they are looked after and the person is a foster carer, the child will be privately fostered. A child who is 16 or 17 and living with a relative or friend will not fall under the remit of Private Fostering Regulations, unless they have a disability. As with informal arrangements the child's birth parents remain wholly responsible for their child in these circumstances, including ensuring that they are safe and their care needs are being met (including financial).

There is a duty on parents of a child who is or will be privately fostered and on anyone who is or intends to foster a child privately to advise the Worcestershire County Council of such arrangements. Worcestershire County Council will need to assess and monitor any such arrangements

Worcestershire County Council may provide support or services to the child or carers if the child is assessed as a "child in need".

Carers of a child subject to Residence Order

A child may come the subject of a Residence Order either through a private law application or as the outcome of Care Proceedings. If the order is made as the result of a private application then Worcestershire County Council may not be involved. If the child or family is known to the Worcestershire County Council then they may be asked to provide a report to the court.

The person in whose favour the Residence Order is made will share parental responsibility with the child's birth parents and will along with the birth parents have responsibility for ensuring the child's care needs are met.

Worcestershire County Council may provide support or services to the child or carers if the child is assessed as a "child in need" and in particular, if

- The arrangement provides an agreed alternative to the child becoming or remaining looked after and
- The arrangement has been agreed as the best permanence plan for the child and
- The family and friends carers have been assessed as suitable to care for the child long term.

These services include

- Counselling, advice and information
- Help to maintain the relationship between the child and the carer through training, respite and mediation,
- Support groups,
- Help with contact arrangements,
- Direct work with the child,
- Financial support dependent on a financial assessment.

An assessment of need and circumstances will always be offered to the child and the carers if

- the child is looked after at the time of application or
- the child was looked after immediately prior to the application or
- the child would have been looked after if not cared for by the family and friends carers.

In other circumstances Worcestershire County Council may offer an assessment of needs and circumstances. If Worcestershire County Council decides that an assessment is not required then they will write to the carers with the decision and allow 28 days for representations.

In some circumstances Worcestershire County Council may consider assistance with legal costs to make an application for a Residence Order, and may provide a Residence Order allowance following a financial assessment. Financial payments may be made:

- to enable the child to live with a family and friend carer where this might not otherwise be possible because of financial difficulties
- where the child has additional needs which require special resources.

Financial support can be made as a single payment or periodically to meet recurring needs. In most cases financial support will be dependent on the assessment of the needs of the child and the circumstances of the carers.

Worcestershire County Council will always consider assistance with legal costs where:

- the child is looked after or would otherwise be looked after and
- Worcestershire County Council supports the application and
- it secures permanency for the child.

Worcestershire County Council may also consider financial support

- To help with set up costs to enable the child to live with the carers
- To help with recurring contact costs
- In order to give foster family time to adjust to continue a level of payment for a period of time if the carers were the child's foster carers.

Residence Order allowances will finish

- When the child becomes 16 unless the child continues in full time education when it may continue to the child is aged 18, or 19 for a child with significant disabilities.
- The child ceased to live with the carers
- The child becomes looked after
- The child qualifies for benefits in his\her own right
- The agreed period for which financial support was offered expires.

Agreement to any one off or discretionary payments, including Residence Order allowance, is agreed by the Service Manager, Safeguarding and

Services to Children and Young People. It is expected that the carers will have claimed any benefits to which they may be entitled such as Child Benefit, Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit. Residence Order allowances are reviewed annually.

Carers of child subject to a Special Guardianship Order

A child may become the subject of a Special Guardianship Order either through a private law application or as the outcome of Care Proceedings. Worcestershire County Council must have assessed the suitability of the applicants prior to the granting of a Special Guardianship Order and must undertake an assessment of need to see if any support is required. A report will be made available to the court which is considering the making of the order.

The person in whose favour the Special Guardianship Order is made has parental responsibility to the exclusion of others with parental responsibility except another Special Guardian and is responsible for ensuring the child is safe and their care needs are met.

Worcestershire County Council will provide support services to those assessed as requiring such services. It will undertake an assessment when requested by the child, parent, Special Guardian or prospective Special Guardian if

- the child is looked after at the time of application or
 - the child was looked after immediately prior to the application or
 - the child would have been looked after if not cared for by the family and friends carers
- and**
- the arrangement provides an agreed alternative to the child becoming or remaining looked after and
 - the arrangement has been agreed as the best permanence plan for the child and
 - the family and friends carers have been assessed as suitable to care for the child long term.

These services include

- Counselling, advice and information
- Help to maintain the relationship between the child and the carer through training, respite and mediation,
- Support groups,
- Help with contact arrangements,
- Direct work with the child,
- Financial support dependent on a financial assessment.

In some circumstances Worcestershire County Council may consider assistance with legal costs to make an application for a Special Guardianship

Order, and may provide a Special Guardianship Order allowance following a financial assessment. Financial payments may be made

- To enable the child to live with a family and friend carer where this might not otherwise be possible because of financial difficulties
- Where the child has additional needs which require special resources.

Financial support can be made as a single payment or periodically to meet recurring needs. In most cases financial support will be dependent on the assessment of the needs of the child and the circumstances of the carers.

Worcestershire County Council will always consider assistance with legal costs where:

- the child is looked after or would otherwise be looked after and
- Worcestershire County Council supports the application and
- it secures permanency for the child.

Worcestershire County Council may also consider financial support

- To help with set up costs to enable the child to live with the carers
- To help with recurring contact costs
- In order to give foster family time to adjust to continue a level of payment for a period of time if the carers were the child's foster carers.

Special Guardianship Order allowances will finish

- When the child becomes 16 unless the child continues in full time education when it may continue to the child is aged 18, or 19 for a child with significant disabilities.
- The child ceased to live with the carers
- The child becomes looked after
- The child qualifies for benefits in his\her own right
- The agreed period for which financial support was offered expires.

Agreement to any one off or discretionary payments, including Special Guardianship Order allowance, is agreed by the Service Manager, Safeguarding and Services to Children and Young People. It is expected that the carers will have claimed any benefits to which they may be entitled such as Child Benefit, Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit. Special Guardianship Order allowances are reviewed annually.

Adoption

Adoption is the process by which all parental rights and responsibilities for a child are permanently transferred to an adoptive parent by a court order .As a result of this the child legally becomes part of the adoptive family.

Worcestershire County Council provides a range of Adoption Support Services to adopted children and their families living within Worcestershire. There are further qualifying criteria dependent on the area in which the adoptive family lived at the time of the order being made and the length of

time from the making of the order. An assessment of need for these services is undertaken at the request of the adopted child, adoptive parent or the birth family. The support required is then set out in an Adoption Support plan and this may include financial support.

Other services which may be provided subject to assessment are

- Counselling, advice and information
- Support groups for children or adopters
- Assistance in relation to contact
- Therapeutic services for children
- Training for adopters
- Respite.

Financial support may only be offered

- where it is necessary to ensure that the adoptive parent can look after the child
- where the child needs special care which requires greater expenditure of resources
- where it is necessary for the local authority to make any special arrangements to facilitate the placement or the adoption by reason of: the age or ethnic origin of the child, or the desirability of the child being placed with the same adoptive parent as his brother or sister or with a child with whom he has previously shared a home
- where such support is to meet recurring costs in respect of travel for the purpose of visits between the child and a related person
- where the local authority considers it appropriate to make a contribution to meet the following kinds of expenditure –
- expenditure on legal costs, including fees payable to a court in relation to an adoption
- expenditure for the purpose of introducing an adoptive child to his adoptive parent
- expenditure necessary for the purpose of accommodating and maintaining the child, including the provision of furniture and domestic equipment, alterations to and adaptations of the home, provision of means of transport, and provision of clothing, toys and other items necessary for the purpose of looking after the child

There are two elements to adoption financial support assessment:

- a) Financial assessment: a financial assessment is undertaken in respect of any request for adoption financial support. This will indicate whether there is automatic eligibility for adoption financial support within the Worcestershire scheme.
- b) Needs assessment of the child: If there is no financial support proposed following financial assessment, or where adoptive parents feel that the amount proposed is insufficient to meet the additional needs of their child which incur costs above the norm, they can request a needs assessment for the child

Before requesting financial support adoptive parents will be expected to have accessed all benefits to which they are entitled.

In determining the amount of financial support the local authority will take into account in the assessment:

- Any recommendations made by the Adoption Panel to the local authority
- The adoptive parent's financial resources (including significant income from any investments, but not the adopters home) including any tax credit, grant, allowance or benefit which would be available if the child lived with them.
- Fostering fees and in some circumstances, allowances, will be taken into account.
- Disability Living Allowance, Care and/or Mobility component, will not be taken into account for the purpose of the means test, as this is a payment for the child. However, it will be taken into account in the child's needs assessment.
- The amount required by the adoptive parent in respect of reasonable outgoings and commitments e.g. housing and transport costs and daily living expenses (but excluding outgoings in respect of the child)
- The financial needs of the child (e.g. because of special diet or need for replacement bedding), which is not covered by DLA.
- Any financial resources of the child (e.g. a trust fund)

Financial support can be a single payment or a periodical payment to meet ongoing costs.

Worcestershire County Council will make financial specific single payments which disregard the need for the means test to support the placement of Worcestershire children in their new adoptive placement.

- £300 settling in grant for each child placed for adoption to facilitate the setting up of the placement.
- Introduction costs (e.g. mileage, accommodation, meals) at agreed rates and as identified in the Placement Plan.
- The single fee payable to a court for an adoption application will be paid up to the Legal Services Commission's rate, unless the applicant is exempt from the fee. Further legal costs can only be paid where the Head of Safeguarding and Services to Children, Young People is in agreement to such payments being made.

When adopters have previously been a child's foster carers, Worcestershire County Council may consider continuing any payments received by foster carers, from the date of placement and for up to 2 years from the date of the Adoption Order. This will be possible regardless of the outcome of their financial assessment, where the child's specific needs would indicate that this is justified and where without such payments, adoption would not be possible.

The Adoption Regulations allow the Local Authority discretion to offer this to foster carers for the purpose of a two year transitional provision to give the family time to adjust to their new circumstance. This arrangement would be reviewed after the first year but will not normally be subject to change unless there is significant change in the financial situation of the adopter or child.

After the two year transitional period the adopter would need to request a further assessment of support needs and any financial support would be determined as outlined previously in this document.

Financial support ceases to be payable to an adoptive parent if:

- The child attains the age of sixteen and leaves full time secondary education. However, if the child continues in full time secondary education it will cease at the end of the academic year after the child's eighteenth birthday.
- In exceptional circumstances, if the child has severe disabilities and continues in full time secondary education, it may continue until the young person reaches the age of nineteen when it will cease at the end of the academic year after the young person's nineteenth birthday
- The child ceases full-time education before the age of 18yrs and commences employment or qualifies for a placement on a government-training scheme or apprenticeship.
- The child qualifies for Income Support or Jobseeker's Allowance in his or her own right
- the child attends a residential or boarding school; in these circumstances the assessed financial support will be reduced by at least 60% of the figure assessed.
- the child becomes looked after by the Local Authority
- the child ceases to have a home with them.
- the child dies
- the child receives a custodial sentence. The Authority will consider continuation of some payment, depending on individual circumstances.

The agreement to pay financial support based on the outcome of the means test and assessment of need lies with the Head of Safeguarding and Services to Children and Young People. Adoption allowances are reviewed on an annual basis.

Family and Friends Foster Carers (Child Looked After)

A child may become looked after in a number of different ways

- a) because the Local Authority has been granted Parental Responsibility via an Interim Care Order or Care Order

- b) because the Local Authority has agreed with the person with Parental Responsibility that it is in the child's best interest to become Looked After or remain Looked After on a voluntary basis whilst being placed with a relative/friend
- c) because the child has been remanded to the care of the Local Authority by the Youth Court in respect of criminal charges.

When a child is looked after Worcestershire County Council has a responsibility wherever possible to make arrangements for the child to live with a member of the family who is approved as a foster carer.

In exceptional circumstances, a child may be placed, as an immediate placement, with a relative, friend or connected person who has not been approved as a foster carer when this is seen as the best way of safeguarding the child and meeting his or her needs. Any such placement must be agreed by a Senior Manager following the completion of a suitability report. The carers become temporarily approved foster carers pending a full assessment and are entitled to all services and support as are available to other foster carers.

For all planned placements with a family and friend carer, and any immediate placements likely to exceed 16 weeks, a full fostering assessment must be undertaken and presented at Worcestershire County Council's fostering panel for a recommendation to the Agency Decision Maker. The Agency Decision Maker will have the final decision on whether to approve family and friends carers as foster carers.

The assessment will look at the specific needs of the child for whom they are being assessed and will take into account

- relationship with and understanding of the child and his\ her needs
- ability to promote and safeguard the child's welfare
- personal and relationship history and whether this is likely to impact on their ability to care for the child
- parenting capacity
- references including work , family and personal references
- medicals
- Criminal Records Check. A caution, conviction or negative information would not necessarily rule out an applicant being approved as a foster carer. The assessment would look at any possible impact on the child.
- Support needs.

Following approval Family and Friends foster carers will be supervised and supported according to the Fostering Services Regulations and Minimum Standards to enable them to meet the needs of the child/ren for which they are caring. They will be entitled to the same support and allowances as non related foster carers. They will be obliged to comply with guidance set out in the Fostering Services Regulations and Minimum Standards.

Family and Friends foster carers will only be approved as foster carers for the particular child/ren for whom they have been assessed.

Supporting Contact with Birth Parents

Worcestershire County Council has a duty to promote contact for all Children in Need. There are differences in this duty depending on whether or not the child is looked after.

Where the child is not looked after Worcestershire County Council will assist in promoting contact between the child and his/her family where it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard and promote his or her welfare. If it is identified that family and friends carers require specific assistance it will provide information about local contact centres and mediation services.

Where a child is looked after Worcestershire County Council endeavours to promote contact between the child and his/her family unless it is not practicable or consistent with the child's welfare. The overall objective will be set out in the child's Care Plan with the specific arrangements in the child's Placement Plan and these will be reviewed as part of the child's review process.

Family Meetings\Family Group Conferences

Family Meetings and Family Group Conferences are meetings which are held between professionals and family members, they promote the involvement of the wider family to find solutions within the family network for the difficulties Children in Need are experiencing.

Worcestershire County Council will offer a family meeting when:

- a family member or friend has offered/has been asked to look after the child away from the child's parents.
- if a child becomes looked after, perhaps following an emergency without a family meeting being held.
- as part of the assessment process, or subsequent planning as part of a Children & Young People's Plan, Child Protection Plan or Looked After Child Plan.
- whenever there is a need identified through the assessment or planning stage for a child.
- where care proceedings are being considered.

The meeting will include family members, friends, the child as appropriate to their age and understanding and any other adults the family think can contribute to a plan for their child.

The welfare of the child remains paramount. Any family meeting arranged, and subsequent plan agreed, must ensure the child or young person is safeguarded and their needs addressed.

Consideration will be given as to whether the meeting is likely to pose any risk to the child or other participants in the meeting. In these situations Worcestershire County Council will try to ensure that sufficient safeguards are

in place for the meeting to proceed. In some circumstances this may not be possible and Worcestershire County Council will explain the reasons for not proceeding to the family, carers and child if of appropriate age and understanding.

During the meeting the child's allocated worker and any other professional who is present will share relevant information, including their analysis of the strengths of the family, and of any concerns they may have regarding harm/risk. They will explain their proposals for the plan for the child based on their analysis.

They will make it clear to the family what support they are able to offer, the extent and limits of that support and any resources that might be available.

The family will also have the opportunity to share information and ask for any other information they feel they need.

The family will then be offered the opportunity to discuss the situation between themselves. They can ask to do this without professionals present or with those professionals they want present. The possible options will have been clearly identified and they will be aware that any proposals they make must safeguard and meet the needs of the child.

Unless it is felt the proposals place the child at significant risk of harm, even if there is a need for further agreement or negotiation of resources outside of the meeting the plan proposed by the family should be agreed in principle.

The case manager has to endorse the plan and agree it is safe before it can be adopted as a plan for the child. If agreed the plan must be incorporated into the child's statutory plan.

If the plan the family propose is not agreed by the case manager, the reasons must be stated clearly to the family.

Working with Partner Agencies

Worcestershire County Council will work with its partner agencies in health, education, and housing and in the voluntary sector to ensure that their staff are aware of the needs of children and young people living with family and friends carers and the challenges facing those carers. They will work with partner agencies to ensure that they are clear about what services they provide and how family and friends carers can access these.

Worcestershire's Family Information Service provides information on a range of universal services such as children's centres, nurseries and schools and signpost to more specialist services. Worcestershire County Council will work with specialist services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), services for children with Special Education Needs and disabilities so that there is a shared understanding of the particular needs of children living with family and friends.

Worcestershire County Council will seek to engage with housing authorities and registered social landlords to ensure that their policies recognise the importance of the role of family and friends carers and that consideration is given, whenever possible, to family and friends carers being given appropriate priority to move to more suitable accommodation if this will prevent the need for a child to become looked after.

Bibliography

Farmer E and Moyers S (2008) Kinship Carer: Fostering Effective Family and Friends Placements.

Hunt J, S Waterhouse, et al (2008) Keeping them in the Family: Outcomes for children placed in kinship care through care proceedings

Care Matters: Young People's responses, DfES 2007

Planning ,Placement and Review: A report of a children's consultation to the DCSF by the Children's Right Director for England, 2009

LOCAL CONTACT DETAILS

Family Information Service

familyinfo@worcestershire.gov.uk

01905 822666

Safeguarding and Services to Children and Young People

childrensteam@worcestershire.gov.uk

Access Centre 0845 607 200

Social Care

PO BOX 585

Worcester

WR4 4AD

Worcestershire NHS Health

www.worcestershirehealth.nhs.uk

Worcestershire Children Safeguarding Board

www.worcestershiresafeguarding.org.uk

Organisations and Information for Family and Friends Carers

Action for Prisoners' Families

Works to reduce the negative impact of imprisonment on prisoners' families. Produces publications and resources, and provides advice, information and training as well as networking opportunities.

www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk

Address: Unit 21, Carlson Court
116 Putney Bridge Road
London, SW15 2NQ

Tel: 020 8812 3600
E-mail: info@actionpf.org.uk

Advice line: 0808 808 2003
info@prisonersfamilieshelpline.org.uk

Addaction

Offers a range of support developed for families and carers affected by substance misuse.

www.addaction.org.uk

Address: 67-69 Cowcross Street
London EC1M 6PU

Tel. 020 7251 5860
Email: info@addaction.org.uk

Adfam

Works with families affected by drugs and alcohol, and supports carers of children whose parents have drug and alcohol problems.

www.adfam.org.uk

Address: 25 Corsham Street,
London N1 6DR

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)

Offers free independent advice and information for parents and carers on a range of state education and schooling issues, including admissions, exclusion, attendance, special educational needs and bullying.

www.ace-ed.org.uk

Address: 1c Aberdeen Studios,
22 Highbury Grove,
London N5 2DQ

General advice line: 0808 800 5793
Exclusion advice line: 0808 800 0327
Exclusion information line: 020 7704 9822 (24hr answer phone)

BeGrand.net

Website offering information and advice to grandparents, plus online and telephone advice.

www.begrand.net

Helpline: 0845 434 6835

British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF)

Provides information and advice about adoption and fostering and publishes resources.

www.baaf.org.uk

Address: Saffron House,
6-10 Kirby Street,
London EC1N 8TS

Tel: 020 7421 2600
Email: mail@baaf.org.uk

Children's Legal Centre

Provides free independent legal advice and factsheets to children, parents, carers and professionals.

www.childrenslegalcentre.com

Address: University of Essex
Wivenhoe Park
Colchester
Essex CO4 3SQ

Tel: 01206 877 910
E-mail: clc@essex.ac.uk
Child Law Advice Line: 0808 802 0008
Community Legal Advice - Education: 0845 345 4345

Citizens Advice Bureaux

Helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice through local bureaux and website.

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Department for Education

Lists details of telephone help lines and online services to provide information, advice and support on a range of issues that parents and families may face in bringing up children and young people.

www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families

Family Rights Group (FGR)

Provides advice to parents and other family members whose children are involved with or require children's social care services because of welfare needs or concerns. Publishes resources, helps to develop support groups for family and friends carers, and runs a discussion board.

www.frg.org.uk

Address: Second Floor
The Print House
18 Ashwin Street
London E8 3DL

Tel: 020 7923 2628
Advice line: 0800 801 0366
Email: advice@frg.org.uk

Family Fund Trust

Helps families with severely disabled or seriously ill children to have choices and the opportunity to enjoy ordinary life. Gives grants for things that make life easier and more enjoyable for the disabled child and their family.

Address: 4 Alpha Court
Monks Cross Drive
York YO32 9WN
www.familyfund.org.uk
Tel: 0845 130 4542
Email: info@familyfund.org.uk

The Fostering Network

Supports foster carers and anyone with an interest in fostering to improve the lives of children in care. Publishes resources and runs Fosterline, a confidential advice line for foster carers including concerns about a child's future, allegations and complaints, legislation and financial matters.

www.fostering.net

Address: 87 Blackfriars Road
London SE1 8HA

Email: info@fostering.net
Tel: 020 7620 6400
Fosterline: 0800 040 7675
Email: fosterline@fostering.net

The Grandparents' Association

Supports grandparents and their families, especially those who have lost or are losing contact with their grandchildren because of divorce, separation or other family problems, those caring for their grandchildren on a full-time basis, and those with childcare responsibilities for their grandchildren.

www.grandparents-association.org.uk

Address: Moot House
The Stow
Harlow
Essex CM20 3AG

Tel: 01279 428040
Helpline: 0845 434 9585
Welfare benefits advice and information: 0844 357 1033
Email: info@grandparents-association.org.uk

Grandparents Plus

Champions the role of grandparents and the wider family in children's lives, especially when they take on the caring role in difficult family circumstances.

Address: Grandparents Plus
18 Victoria Park Square
Bethnal Green
London E2 9PF

Tel: 020 8981 8001
Email: info@grandparentsplus.org.uk

Mentor UK

Promotes the health and wellbeing of children and young people to reduce the damage that drugs can do to lives.

www.mentoruk.org.uk

Address: Fourth Floor
74 Great Eastern Street
London EC2A 3JG

Tel: 020 7739 8494
Email: admin@mentoruk.org

Family Mediation Helpline

Provides information and advice about family mediation services and eligibility for public funding.

08456 026627
www.familymediationhelpline.co.uk

National Family Mediation (NFM)

Provides mediation services to support couples who are separated, and their children and others affected by this.

www.nfm.org.uk

4 Barnfield Hill, Exeter EX1 1SR.
0300 4000 636

general@nfm.org.uk

Partners of Prisoners and Families Support Group

Operates helpline and provides a variety of services to support anyone who has a link with someone in prison, prisoners and other agencies.

www.partnersofprisoners.co.uk

Address: Valentine House
1079 Rochdale Road
Blackley
Manchester M9 8AJ

Tel: 0161 702 1000
Offenders' Families Helpline Tel: 0808 808 2003
Email: info@prisonersfamilieshelpline.co.uk

Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT)

Provides practical and emotional support to prisoners and to their children and families. The Kinship Care Support Service provides support and advice to family members and friends who care for children whose parents are in HMP Holloway.

www.prisonadvice.org.uk

Address: Park Place
12 Lawn Lane
Vauxhall
London
SW8 1UD
Telephone: 020 77359535

Parents Against Drug Abuse (PADA)

Delivers support and services to the families of substance users, including a national helpline.

www.pada.org.uk

Address: The Foundry
Marcus Street
Birkenhead CH41 1EU

Phone: 0151 649 1580
National Families Helpline: 08457 023867

Parentline Plus

Provides help and support in all aspects of family life, including information, an online chat facility and a 24 hour helpline.

www.familylives.org.uk

Address: CAN Mezzanine
49-51 East Road
London N1 6AH

Tel: 020 7553 3080
24hr Advice line: 0808 800 2222
Email: parentsupport@familylives.org.uk

TalktoFrank

The government's national drugs helpline which offers free confidential drugs information and advice 24 hours a day. Information and advice is also available via the website.

www.talktofrank.com

24 hour advice line: 0800 77 66 00

Text: 82111

Email: frank@talktofrank.com

Voice

Advocacy organisation for children living away from home or in need.

www.voiceyp.org

Address: 320 City Road

London EC1V 2NZ

Tel: 020 7833 5792

Young person's advice line: 0808 800 5792

Email: info@voiceyp.org

Young Minds

Works to improve the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people and empowering their parents and carers.

www.youngminds.org.uk

Address: 48-50 St John Street

London EC1M 4DG

Tel: 020 7336 8445

Parents helpline: 0808 802 5544