

Kinship Care FAQs for Social Workers

How can I ensure the school understands the child's kinship care situation?

Social workers should (with consent) share relevant legal and background information and encourage schools to record the child's status accurately. This helps staff provide appropriate support and access funding.

Are children in kinship care eligible for pupil premium plus or other educational support?

If they were previously looked after by the local authority, they may be eligible for pupil premium plus. Others may qualify for free school meals (FSM) or special educational needs (SEN) support depending on their needs. Social workers can help carers and schools access this funding and ensure it's used effectively.

How can I advocate for the child's educational needs?

Attend school meetings, such as SEN reviews and pastoral support plan meetings and ensure that assessments, such as an EHCP, are in place if needed. Support carers in navigating the education system and encourage trauma-informed approaches and consistent communication.

What if the kinship carer is struggling to engage with the school?

Offer support with communication, attend meetings alongside them, and help build positive relationships with school staff. Signpost to charities like Kinship or Family Rights Group for additional guidance.

What role does the virtual school play for children in kinship care?

The Virtual School plays a strategic role in supporting the education of children in kinship care by promoting their educational outcomes and providing guidance to schools, social workers and carers. While not all kinship care children fall under statutory duties, the Virtual School Extended Duties team offers advice and champions efforts to improve attendance, attainment and aspirations. Children in formal arrangements like special guardianship orders or those previously in care may receive more targeted support.

Any further questions?

If you have any further questions or would like support, please contact the Virtual School Extended Duties team vsextendedduties@hants.gov.uk