

## About special guardianship

Special guardianship provides an increasingly popular legal route to permanence for children and young people who are unable to live with their birth parents.

Since special guardianship was introduced in 2005, the number of orders made every year has grown rapidly and in 2015/16 3,830 children left care via a Special Guardianship Order (SGO).

A Government review of the use of SGOs concluded that a 'significant minority' of children were being placed at risk through an SGO being made inappropriately and there being inadequate support for special guardians (DfE, 2015).

In direct response to the increase in the number of SGOs being granted, and to help and support the growing number of special guardianship families, Family Action has launched a new national Special Guardianship Support Service.

## About us

Family Action is a charity committed to building stronger families by delivering innovative and effective services and support that reaches out to many of the UK's most vulnerable people.

We seek to empower people and communities to address their issues and challenges through practical, financial and emotional help.

## Family Action Special Guardianship Support Service

Supporting special guardians through a bespoke website, a dedicated helpline and a wide range of information and resources



### Family Action Head Office

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Registered Charity no: 264713. Registered Company Limited by Guarantee in England and Wales: 01068186. Patron: Her Majesty the Queen. Chair: Bryan Portman MBA FCCA FCIS. Chief Executive: David Holmes CBE

This national support service is the first of its kind. It has been created in direct response to the increase in the number of SGOs being granted and to support the growing number of special guardianship families.

### Service aims

Our Special Guardianship Support Service aims to:

- improve outcomes for children living with special guardians
- provide an accessible source of trusted support, information and guidance to special guardians.

### Model

The Special Guardianship Support Service is a subscription service available to Local Authorities across the country.

It offers a bespoke website for special guardians and the Local Authority professionals supporting them. The website content and its resources can only be accessed with a personalised login.

The website covers information and guidance on a range of issues including:

- The role of a special guardian
- Family relationships - how to manage birth family contact and sibling interactions
- Helping a child to feel secure - how to manage transitions and the impact of domestic violence
- Supporting a child with a special need or health condition
- How special guardians can take care of their health and wellbeing
- Supporting a child's identity

The service also offers special guardians the chance to speak to trained professionals via text, email, a web chat function on the website or by calling a freephone helpline.

### Subscribe to our service

Once a Local Authority has signed up to the service, all special guardians and Local Authority professionals supporting them will be granted access to:

- a **dedicated website** containing comprehensive and up-to-date information and guidance, downloadable resources and signposting to other sources of support
- online **web chat** with trained professionals available 7 days a week out of hours
- **freephone helpline** offering support from trained operators 7 days a week
- discounted access to up-coming **training events and consultancy services**

### Cost

The cost for each Local Authority to subscribe to the service is **£6,950 p.a.** (excl VAT).

### How to subscribe

For further information and to subscribe to the service please email:

**SGtechnical@family-action.org.uk** or call 020 7254 6251

You can visit the dedicated website at **[www.specialguardiansupport.org.uk](http://www.specialguardiansupport.org.uk)**

