



Building stronger families

## About special guardianship

Special guardianship is an increasingly common 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.

In 2018 3,430 children ceased to be looked after during the year subject to a special guardianship.<sup>1</sup>

However, the Government's review of Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs) in 2015 concluded that a 'significant minority' of children were being placed at risk through inappropriate SGOs and inadequate support for special guardians.<sup>2</sup>

We launched the Special Guardianship Service to address the growth in SGOs and better support the families of over 25,000 children nationwide who are subject to a Special Guardianship Order\*.

## About us

Family Action is a charity committed to building stronger families and brighter lives. We provide innovative and effective services and support to many of the UK's most vulnerable people.

We help individuals and communities address the challenges they face through practical, emotional and financial support.

# Special Guardianship Support Service



### Family Action

34 Wharf Road, London N1 7GR

T: 020 7254 6251

info@family-action.org.uk

www.family-action.org.uk

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

www.familyaction.org.uk

<sup>1</sup> Children's Commissioner (2019) Children on Special Guardianship Orders – <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/vulnerability-in-numbers/groups/children-on-special-guardianship-orders/>

<sup>2</sup> DfE (2015) Special Guardianship Review – [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/487243/SGR\\_Final\\_Combined\\_Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/487243/SGR_Final_Combined_Report.pdf)

**Our national Special Guardianship Support Service is the first of its kind, created in direct response to the increasing 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 with special guardianship orders by providing 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 including an exclusive access website for special guardians and the professionals supporting them.

The website content and its resources can only be accessed with a personalised login and provides 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
- Working with schools
- Accessing financial support
- Managing birth family contact
- 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 opportunity to speak with trained professionals via text, email, online chat or by calling a freephone helpline.

## Subscribe to our service

Once a Local Authority signs up to the service, all special guardians and professionals supporting them will have access to:

- A dedicated website containing comprehensive, up-to-date information and guidance, downloadable resources and signposting to other sources of support
- Freephone helpline and online chat offering support from trained professionals 9am-3pm and 6-9pm Monday to Friday
- Discounted access to upcoming training events and consultancy services

## Pricing

A single Local Authority subscription to the service costs £6,950. p.a. (excl. VAT).

## How to subscribe

For further information and to access the service please get in touch:

**Email:** [SGtechnical@family-action.org.uk](mailto:SGtechnical@family-action.org.uk)

**Call:** 020 7254 6251

**Online:** [www.specialguardiansupport.org.uk](http://www.specialguardiansupport.org.uk)

