



Hull City Council

Children and Family Services

Hull Kinship Local Offer



2026/27

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Start Here:

Get the right help for your situation.

Caring for a child who cannot live with their parents can feel overwhelming.

You are not expected to manage this alone, and support is available at every stage.

What do you need help with?

I am thinking about taking on the care of a child.

Go to: What usually happens in kinship care (page 5) and Introduction to Kinship Care (page 6)

You can:

- Understand your legal options (informal care, fostering, court orders)
- Get advice before deciding.
- Ask for a family group conference to involve your wider family.

Start by contacting the Kinship Care Team for advice.

I am already caring for a child.

Go to: Support for kinship carers (page 20)

You can:

- Access financial, practical, and emotional support
- Get help with school, behaviour, or wellbeing.
- Ask for a review or assessment if your situation changes.

Check your legal arrangement as this affects what support you may receive.

I am worried about money or struggling financially.

Go to: Financial support (page 18)

You may be able to get:

- Financial help in urgent situations
- Allowances linked to legal orders or fostering.
- Advice on benefits, grants and managing costs.

Ask for a financial assessment if you are unsure what help is available.

I am worried about a child's wellbeing or behaviour.

Go to: Emotional and therapeutic support (page 22)

You can:

- Get advice if a child is struggling emotionally or behaviourally.
- Access support even if the child is not looked after.
- Speak to school, your GP or the Kinship Care Team

Early support can prevent problems getting worse.

I need help with school, SEND or education.

Go to: Education and Virtual School support (page 23-24)

You can:

- Speak to the school's designated teacher.
- Get support from the Virtual School
- Access SEND support if needed.

Let the school know the child is in kinship care.

I need help with housing.

Go to: Housing support (page 29)

We can help if:

- Your home is too small or unsuitable.
- You are at risk of homelessness.
- You need to move to care for a child.

Contact us early, housing issues can often be resolved before they become urgent.

How to get help now.

If you are unsure where to start, contact:

Kinship Care Team (your main point of contact)

✉ kinship@hullcc.gov.uk

☎ 01482 612 800

Or speak to:

- Your child's social worker (if one is involved)
- Your fostering worker (if you are an approved carer)

What you can expect from us

- Clear advice and explanations
- Help to understand your options.
- Support based on your situation and needs.
- A named contact where ongoing support is needed.

Not sure what applies to you?

Many carers feel this way at first. Contact the Kinship Care Team and we will help you understand your situation and what to do next.

Section 1:

Guidance

This section sets out the policy framework that underpins kinship care in Hull, including the legal context, key principles and standards that guide practice. It explains how decisions are made, how services work with families, and the different types of kinship arrangements and what they mean in practice.

It is intended for kinship carers, families and professionals who want to understand the expectations, responsibilities and processes involved in kinship care.

This section is useful for making informed decisions, understanding legal options, and knowing what to expect from services. It provides clarity and consistency, helping families and practitioners work together to achieve safe, stable, and lasting arrangements for children.



Introduction to Kinship Care

This guide is for you if you are caring for a child who cannot live with their parents or thinking about doing so.

This Local Offer has been developed using national legislation and statutory guidance as a framework. Learning from local practice, feedback from kinship carers, children and partner organisations has highlighted areas of focus particular to Hull. Comparisons have also been made with other local authorities to identify best practice in areas of common interest.

What this document can help you do

- Understand your options if you are thinking about, or already caring for, a child who cannot live with their parents.
- Find out what support you can get, including financial help, education support, and advice.
- Know what to do next and who to contact if you need help or are unsure about your situation.

Hull's Kinship Local Offer is rooted in a strong family-first approach, where children are supported to remain within their families and networks wherever it is safe to do so. Kinship carers play a vital role in providing children with stability, continuity of relationships and a sense of belonging.

In Hull, most children who cannot live with their parents are cared for within their family networks. This reflects a commitment to relational practice, early identification of family networks, and family-led solutions.

National guidance is clear that all children living in kinship arrangements should receive the support they need to safeguard their welfare, whether or not they are formally looked after by the local authority.

This Local Offer aligns with:

- The Children Act 1989 and wider safeguarding guidance.
- The Kinship Care Statutory Guidance (2024)
- Hull's Children and Young People Plan 2025-2030 and Hull Community Plan priorities.

It explains:

- the different types of kinship care
- what support is available in Hull?
- how services work with kinship families

It is informed by local data, practice insights and feedback from kinship carers, children and professionals and reflects what we know works well for kinship families in Hull.

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Definition and Types of Kinship Care

Statutory guidance defines kinship care as, 'any situation in which a child is being raised in the care of a friend or family member who is not their parent. The arrangement may be temporary or longer term.'

The following is a summary of the types of kinship care arrangements. This list is not exhaustive, and full details can be found in, *Kinship Care: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (October 2024)*.

- **Informal Kinship Care:** Private family arrangements where a close relative cares for the child without local authority involvement or a court order
- **Short-Term Private Arrangements:** Where a child under 16 is accommodated for fewer than 28 days by someone who is not a close relative
- **Private Fostering:** Where someone who is not a close relative for a child aged under 16 looks after the child for 28 days or more, as defined under Section 66 of the Children Act 1989
- **Child Arrangements Orders:** Orders placing a child with a friend or family member who is not a parent
- **Special Guardianship Orders:** Where a court order has been appointing a friend or family member as the child's special guardian
- **Kinship Foster Care:** Where a child is looked after by the local authority and placed with a friend or family member who is an approved foster carer
- **Adoption by Relatives or Friends:** Where the adopter was a friend or family member prior to the adoption order

 www.gov.uk/government/publications/kinship-care-framework-for-local-authorities

Legal status matters. It affects parental responsibility, decision making and access to support. This Local Offer explains these differences and the implications for families.

Who Can Be a Kinship Carer

Kinship carers include:

- close relatives (e.g. grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, stepparents)
- extended family and connected people.
- friends or others known to the child through family or community life.

All carers must be able to provide safe, stable, and consistent care that meets the child's needs. Hull recognises and values the essential contribution of kinship carers across the city.

Support in Hull

Support is delivered through Children's Services working with education, health, housing, and voluntary organisations, and is:

- available at different stages (early advice, assessment, ongoing care)
- based on the child's needs, while recognising that legal status determines entitlements, duties, and funding routes

Kinship Care Team

Kinship carers can access support from the Kinship Care team at any stage of their caring journey. The team works in partnership with schools and colleges, voluntary and community organisations, and charities, to achieve the best outcomes for kinship families.

✉ kinship@hullcc.gov.uk

☎ 01482 612 800

🌐 www.hullfostering.co.uk

Additional Resources

Kinship. The leading kinship care charity in England and Wales.

🌐 www.kinship.org.uk/support-and-advice/advice-and-information/becoming-a-kinship-carer/

Family Rights Group. Guidance on initial assessments, where to go for legal advice and more general information about Kinship Care is available from this specialist child welfare charity.

🌐 www.frg.org.uk from the homepage, search “kinship”

Hull City Council. The council's website provides help in accessing universal services such as free school meals and schools' admissions alongside more specialised information.

🌐 www.hull.gov.uk/children-families

Our Values, Principles and Objectives

Hull's approach is grounded in the Children Act 1989 principle that children are best cared for within their families.

Core Principles

- The child's welfare is paramount.
- Children's views are actively sought, heard, and taken seriously.
- Families and networks are involved in decisions.
- Children remain within family-based care where safe.
- Family networks are identified early and revisited to support timely, stable arrangements.

How We Work

Practice in Hull is relational, and strengths based, promoting a strong family-first culture. It is built on respectful, clear communication and partnership with other agencies.

Permanence planning starts early with decisions that are proportionate, transparent, focused on long term stability and made with children, parents, and carers.

Where the local authority is involved:

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- assessments consider the child's needs and carer's capacity.
- legal options are explained clearly.
- plans are confirmed in writing.

Kinship Care as First Option

If a child cannot live with their parents, family or network care is explored first, including through early family group decision making.

Carers are supported to consider legal options that provide stability. Support is based on need, while recognising that legal status affects eligibility, duties, and financial support.

What this means for you

- We will involve you in decisions.
- We will explain things clearly.
- We will focus on keeping children in families.

Equality, Inclusion and Care Experience Commitment

Hull is a diverse city, and kinship families reflect this. We are committed to ensuring services are inclusive, accessible, and responsive to different needs.

We recognise and respect difference, and aim to provide clear, accessible information and support that reflects individual circumstances. Barriers such as disability, health needs, poverty, language, faith, or discrimination are actively considered in how support is delivered.

If you need information in a different format or language, please contact the Kinship Care Team. We will work with you to make sure you can access the information and support available.

Examples of support available include:

- **Translation and interpretation support**, including written information in different languages or access to interpreters during meetings.
- **Disability-related adjustments**, such as accessible formats (e.g. large print or easy read), support to attend meetings, or adaptations to how services are delivered.

 www.hull.gov.uk/strategies-policies-plans-performance/equality-diversity/

Working with Families

We work with families in a way that values their experience and supports them to take part fully in decisions about their care.

Care Experience

Hull recognises the importance of understanding the experiences of children who have had contact with the care system. The council is committed to strengthening how care experience is recognised and responded to in policy and practice.

 www.leavingcarehull.org.uk further guidance on support for Care Leavers and

Our Standards of Practice

Work with kinship families in Hull is based on clear, consistent, and measurable standards.

When working with you, we will:

- Treat you with respect and without judgement and recognise your role as a key partner in caring for the child.
- Explain decisions, roles, and legal arrangements clearly, including what they mean for you and the child.
- Return calls, emails, or messages within two working days. Where this is not possible, we will keep you informed.
- Provide you with a named contact, so you know who to speak to about your situation.
- Involve you in assessments, planning, and reviews, and ensure your views are recorded.

Planning and decision-making:

- You will receive written plans and summaries after meetings, including what has been agreed and next steps.
- Decisions will be explained in plain language, including the reasons behind them.
- We will review plans regularly with you, especially if circumstances change.

Working together:

- We will work collaboratively with your family network and partner agencies to support stable arrangements.
- We will be clear about what support is available, what you are entitled to, and how to access it.

Information and confidentiality:

- Your information will be handled sensitively and stored securely.
- We will usually ask for your consent before sharing information, unless there is a safeguarding or legal reason not to
- We will explain when and why information needs to be shared without consent.

 www.hull.gov.uk/strategies-policies-plans-performance/data-protection-confidentiality-policy

Legal Framework

Statutory guidance requires the Kinship Local Offer to explain the legal framework for kinship care clearly so that carers and families can make informed decisions. This includes information about the local authority's powers and duties, the different legal routes through which children may be cared for, and the implications of these arrangements for children, carers and parents.

This Local Offer outlines the main legal routes through which children may live with family or friends, how decisions are made, and what those arrangements mean for parental responsibility, support and stability.

At the centre of this framework is the Children Act 1989, particularly Sections 17, 20 and 31, which define the different levels of local authority involvement and responsibility.

Children in Need (Section 17, Children Act 1989)

Section 17 places a general duty on the local authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need within their area. This may include providing a range of services to children and their families, depending on assessed needs and available resources. It is intended to sustain family arrangements and, where safe, prevent the need for children to become looked after.

Voluntary Accommodation (Section 20, Children Act 1989)

Under Section 20 a local authority may accommodate a child with the consent of those who hold parental responsibility. In some situations, a child may be looked after by the local authority while living with family members or friends. Parents retain parental responsibility under Section 20 arrangements. Consent to accommodation must be informed and freely given and can be withdrawn at any time.

Care Proceedings (Section 31, Children Act 1989)

Local authorities must provide leaving care support to eligible young people who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks, including some time after their 16th birthday. This includes young people placed with kinship foster carers.

Support includes:

- A Personal Adviser up to the age of 25
- Assistance with education, employment, or training
- A £3,000 bursary for those entering higher education.

These responsibilities are outlined in the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010, the Children Act 1989 (Higher Education Bursary) (England) Regulations 2009 and associated statutory guidance.

 www.leavingcarehull.org.uk further guidance on support for Care Leavers

Types of Kinship Care

Kinship care can take different forms depending on the legal arrangement, who holds parental responsibility, and the level of involvement from the local authority. These differences affect decision making, support and stability.

Which type are you? (quick guide)

Type	Situation	What this means for you
Informal (family) arrangement	agreed within the family, without a court order or local authority involvement	The type of arrangement affects the support you may receive: access to universal services and early help; limited financial support unless assessed as needed
Local authority supported arrangement	where the child is supported or accommodated by the local authority (e.g. under Section 17 or 20)	assessment, planning, and support based on the child's needs
Formal (court ordered or fostering) arrangement	approved as a foster carer or with a legal order such as a Child Arrangements Order or Special Guardianship Order	clearer legal responsibility and may include financial, practical and therapeutic support

In Hull, family members and connected people are identified as early as possible, including through family group decision making, so that children can remain safely within their networks.

Informal and Formal Kinship Care

Kinship care arrangements can broadly be grouped into informal (family-led) and formal (local authority or court-led) arrangements. The differences affect responsibility, decision making and support.

If you are unsure which arrangement applies to you, contact the Kinship Care Team, who will help you understand your situation and what support is available.

Informal Kinship Care

Informal kinship care refers to private arrangements made within families, where a child is cared for by a relative or connected person without a court order or the child being looked after by the local authority.

In these arrangements:

- the arrangement is agreed directly between the parents (or those with parental responsibility) and the carer.
- parental responsibility usually remains with the parents.
- the carer does not automatically have legal authority to make all decisions.
- The local authority does not have an ongoing statutory role unless:
- a child is assessed as being in need under Section 17, or safeguarding concerns arise.

Most families are supported through universal services such as health and education, with access to early help where appropriate. Financial support is not routinely provided

in informal arrangements but may be considered where there is an assessed need to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

Private Fostering Arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when a child under 16 (or under 18 if disabled) is cared, for 28 days or more by someone who is not a parent or a "close relative" as defined by the Children Act 1989.

This includes situations where a child is cared for by:

- extended family members (such as cousins or great aunts)
- family friends or other connected adults.

In these arrangements:

- parental responsibility remains with the parent.
- day to day care is undertaken by the private foster carer.
- By law, the parent and the private foster carer must notify the local authority of the arrangement.

The Local Authority has a duty to:

- assess the suitability of the arrangement.
- visit regularly to monitor the child's welfare.
- provide advice and support to the child, carer and parents.

Failure to notify a private fostering arrangement is an offence, and professionals and families are expected to inform the local authority where such arrangements exist.

Formal Kinship Care

Formal kinship care involves a defined role for the local authority and/or the courts. This includes both kinships foster care (connected carers) and court ordered arrangements.

Kinship Foster Care (Connected Carers)

Where a child is looked after by the local authority under Section 20 or Section 31 of the Children Act 1989, they must be placed with an approved foster carer. This may include a family member or friend who becomes a connected carer.

Hull actively identifies potential carers within the child's network. In urgent situations, a child may be placed with a connected person under temporary approval, while a full fostering assessment is completed.

The assessment process considers:

- the child's needs, wishes and relationships.
- the carer's capacity to provide safe and stable care.
- their role within the family network

Checks and assessment activity will include safeguarding checks, references and health information, and are completed in line with fostering regulations and national standards.

Once approved:

- the local authority shares parental responsibility and holds corporate parenting duties.
- approved foster carers receive fostering allowances in line with local policy and fostering regulations.

- carers are supported by a fostering social worker.
- training, supervision and regular review arrangements are in place.

Connected carers are fully involved in care planning and are supported to meet children's emotional, behavioural and developmental needs.

Court Ordered Kinship Care

Where children cannot return to their parents, longer term arrangements may be secured through the courts, including:

- Child Arrangements Orders
- Special Guardianship Orders
- in some cases, adoption by a relative

Child Arrangement Order

A Child Arrangements Order may be appropriate where a child is being cared for on a longer-term basis by a family member or friend.

If you have a Child Arrangements Order, you will have parental responsibility for the child. This means you can make day-to-day decisions about their care. You should still discuss important decisions with anyone else who also has parental responsibility.

The order sets out who the child will live with and helps provide stability, as it prevents a parent from removing the child from the carer without agreement or further court involvement.

Where the local authority is involved, a support plan will be prepared and shared with the court. This plan looks at the needs of the child and the carer, and the support required. It may include arrangements for family time, education, financial support, health, emotional wellbeing, social development, and the needs of the wider family.

Special Guardianship Order

A Special Guardianship Order made by a Court determines that a child or a young person lives with a specified person permanently. The Special Guardian acquires overriding parental responsibility for the child and makes day to day decisions about the child's care. Parental responsibility is shared with the child's parents, but the Special Guardian has the primary role as they care for the child.

Both public and private applications require an SGO assessment. Where the local authority is involved, a support plan outlining the needs of the child and the carers is compiled and presented to Court, following oversight from the Connected Carers Panel or the Special Guardianship Panel. This covers a range of support areas, including family time, education, health, finance, emotional and social development and the needs of the wider family.

Adoption Order

In some circumstances it may be appropriate for a child to be adopted by family or friends. When a child is adopted, the child's parents lose all parental responsibility, and the adoptive parent acquires parental responsibility for the child. The adoptive parents become the legal parents, and the birth parents cease to be the legal parents, although the child in most cases maintains some form of keeping in touch with their birth parents.

It is acknowledged that adoption has lifelong implications and the regional adoption service, One Adoption North and Humber offers adoption support services for adopted people, birth families and adoptive families. Support plans are compiled as part of the adoption assessment process which cover areas including the child's needs in terms of understanding adoption throughout their childhood, education, health, contact, emotional and social needs and finance.

If you are thinking about adopting a child, please contact One Adoption North and Humber who will support you at every step of your journey

✉ OANH.RAA@york.gov.uk

☎ 03453 052 576

Text 'ADOPT' to 81888 for the standard text rate

🌐 www.oneadoption.co.uk/about-us/about-one-adoption-north-and-humber

Planning for Stability

When children are unable to return home, planning focuses on achieving safe, stable and long-term arrangements without unnecessary delay.

Family group decision making is central to this approach, supporting families to develop their own plans and identify kinship care options early.

Support to sustain arrangements may include:

- early help and coordinated multi agency services.
- support under Section 17 where required.
- access to legal advice to support decision making.

Care plans are regularly reviewed to ensure that arrangements remain appropriate and continue to meet the child's needs.

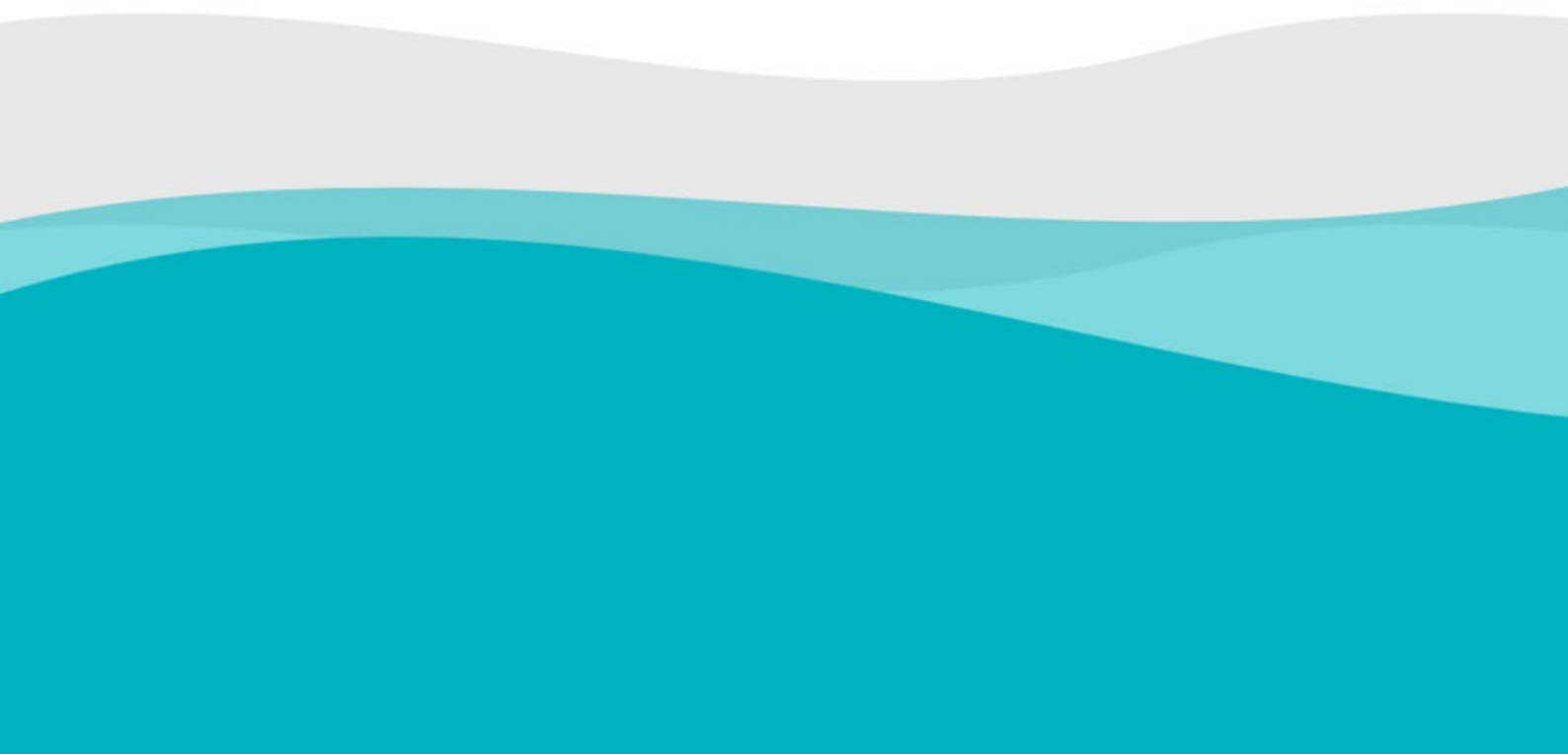
Section 2:

Support For Kinship Families

This section sets out the range of support available to kinship families in Hull, including advice, financial help, practical support, education, emotional wellbeing and support through key transitions such as adolescence and adulthood.

It is primarily aimed at kinship carers, children and young people, as well as professionals who support them.

This section is designed to help families understand what support is available, when it can be accessed, and how services work together to meet children's needs. It recognises that every family is different, and that support may change over time. By bringing this information together, it aims to make it easier for families to find the right help at the right time.



Help and Advice

Most kinship care arrangements are supported through services such as health, education and housing. However, you may need advice or support, especially at the early stages or if your situation changes.

Children and young people may have access to advocacy services where they are supported by the local authority. Advocacy helps ensure their views are heard and considered in decisions about their care."

Start here.

If you are unsure what to do, or need help:

- Speak to the Kinship Care Team for advice, guidance and support.
- If a worker is already involved, speak to your child's social worker or fostering worker.

The Kinship Care Team is your main point of contact for information, advice and support at any stage of your journey.

✉ kinship@hullcc.gov.uk

☎ 01482 612 800

Other ways to get help.

🌐 www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk Hulls Kinship Foster Carers are automatically enrolled and given access to an essential network for fostering that brings together everyone who is involved in the lives of children in foster care.

You may also get support from:

- **Family Hubs** advice, groups and local support for families
- **Schools and colleges** help with education, attendance and wellbeing.
- **Health services** support from GPs, health visitors and other professionals
- **Local support agencies and charities**

🌐 www.hull.gov.uk general information about schools, colleges, leisure facilities and support for young people is available on the Hull City Council website

🌐 www.familyhubshull.org.uk how Family Hubs can support you and where to find them

🌐 www.beststartinlife.gov.uk a useful resource for early years, childcare, preparing for school and more.

🌐 www.connect.humber.nhs.uk/service/hull-health-visiting-and-school-nursing The visiting and school nursing service work with all families, starting in pregnancy until young people leave school and beyond, including those with SEND up to 25 years of age

🌐 www.hull.nhs.uk local health services are detailed on the website

🌐 www.kinship.org.uk/support-and-advice/advice-and-information/becoming-a-kinship-carer/ the leading kinship care charity in England and Wales.

A range of local services is available to support children and kinship carers, including education, SEND support, financial advice and activities for children and young people.

The rest of this section looks at some of the key support available for kinship families.

Family Group Decision Making / Family Group Conferencing

Family Group Decision Making brings together family members and people important to the child to plan for their care and support.

Why this matters for you

- **Your voice is heard** - you and your family help shape decisions about the child.
- **More support around you** - wider family and networks can offer practical and emotional help.
- **Fewer delays** - early planning can prevent situations escalating or going to court.

In Hull, family group decision making is delivered primarily through family group conferencing and family network meetings. Family group conferencing is used not only in response to immediate concerns but also at transition points to support stability and reduce conflict within families.

Where a kinship carer is identified, this informs viability assessment and next steps, including consideration of kinship fostering or legal permanence options.

Families are supported to implement agreed plans through coordinated services, which may include early help, assessment, and ongoing support where required.

Family group decision making is used at different points, including when there are concerns about a child's wellbeing or when longer-term plans are being made. It helps identify kinship carers early and supports family-led solutions.

How to ask for one

- Speak to your social worker (if one is involved)
- Or contact the Kinship Care Team to request information or ask for a referral.

A worker will explain the process and whether family group decision making is appropriate for your situation.

 www.hull.gov.uk/family-support/family-group-conferencing

Financial Support

Caring for a child can place additional financial pressure on kinship carers, particularly where arrangements are made suddenly or employment arrangements need to change. Hull City Council considers financial support as part of assessment and planning, with a focus on promoting stability and meeting the child's needs.

What you might get

Type of support	What this could include
Early or discretionary support (Section 17)	One-off payments, help with essentials (e.g. beds, clothing, school items)
Allowances linked to legal orders	Financial support for carers with Child Arrangements Orders or Special Guardianship Orders (where eligible)
Fostering allowances	Payments for approved kinship foster carers to cover the cost of caring for the child
Advice and benefits support	Help to access benefits, grants and financial advice (e.g. Welfare Rights Service, Citizens Advice)

What to do if you need help

- Speak to your social worker or Kinship Team contact.
- Or contact the Kinship Care Team directly for guidance.

Support may include discretionary assistance under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, as well as allowances linked to Child Arrangements Orders or Special Guardianship Orders where applicable. Hull aims to minimise financial disadvantage for kinship carers where support is available, based on assessment of need, eligibility criteria and available resources.

Hull City Council operates a no detriment policy to enable foster cares, both mainstream and connected person carers in securing a permanent order for the children in their care. This means they will receive the same amount of money that they currently receive (less child benefit).

The financial package is as follows -

- Carers will continue to receive a financial payment. This will be equivalent to the fostering rate for their child less child benefit
- The payment will be based on the age of the child, with carers receiving the age banding allowance as the child gets older
- If the foster carer is in receipt of a Payment for Skills this payment will continue on their existing level, even if they no longer continue to foster
- Carers will receive the annual inflation increase when this is awarded
- Carers will receive the following allowances
 - Festival Allowance - equivalent to 1x week Fostering Allowance
 - Birthday Allowance - equivalent to 1x week Fostering Allowance
 - Holiday Allowance - equivalent to 2x weeks Fostering Allowance
- This financial package will not be means tested
- The Council will also assist with legal fees to obtain the Special Guardianship Order, Child Arrangement Order or Adoption Order
- The financial support will cease on the young person's 18th birthday when the legal order ends, unless they cease to be cared for by the carers at an earlier

age. If the young person is in full time education, financial support can continue until the end of the academic year in which the young person becomes 18 years of age

- Any ad hoc or additional regular payments being paid to reflect the specific circumstances of the child will be considered on an individual basis and will be outlined in the Support Plan, including how these payments will be reviewed

Kinship carers are also supported to access benefits advice and income maximisation through the Welfare Rights Service and Citizens Advice, alongside help with childcare costs and information services for families.

If you disagree with a decision about financial support, you can ask for the decision to be reviewed and seek further advice, including from independent organisations.

Hull City Council Benefits and Welfare Advice. Help with Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Universal Credit, grants, and more.

 01482 300 300

 www.hull.gov.uk/benefits-support-and-welfare-advice

 www.hull.gov.uk/help-with-money

Citizens Advice Hull and East Riding. Advice on benefits, housing, debt, employment and more. Face-to-face drop-in and booked appointments.

 0808 278 7981

 www.hullandeastridingcab.org.uk

Support for Kinship Carers

Caring for children who may have experienced trauma can be demanding and emotionally complex. Practical and carer focused support is intended to help kinship carers build confidence, reduce pressure and maintain stable arrangements for children.

This reflects Hull's commitment to supporting stability of families.

Support available to Kinship Carers may depend on eligibility.

Immediate help (first weeks)

When a child first comes to live with you, support may include:

- help with essential household items (e.g. beds, clothing, safety equipment)
- support with school uniforms and settling into education.
- advice to help you understand your role and next steps.

Ongoing support

As arrangements continue, you may be able to access:

- advice and guidance to help you meet the child's needs.
- training and courses (e.g. behaviour, trauma-informed care)
- peer support groups and opportunities to connect with other carers.
- sleepovers or short breaks (where eligible)

- practical help to access services and overcome barriers.
- A Kinship Client Support Group delivering events and activities

How to get this support

- Speak to your social worker or Kinship Team contact (if you have one)
- Or contact the Kinship Care Team directly to discuss what support is available.

Support will depend on your situation and eligibility, but you can ask for help at any stage.

✉ kinship@hullcc.gov.uk

☎ 01482 612 800

🌐 www.hull.gov.uk/LearningandDevelopment

Examples of available support

Training

Kinship carers have access to a range of training opportunities. Training helps build confidence and provides practical tools to meet the unique challenges.

of kinship care. Training and parenting courses, include support with behaviour, attachment and trauma-informed care, delivered either:

- In-person classroom sessions
- Online training via Microsoft Teams
- E-learning modules.

To access training, speak with the Kinship Care Team who can advise on suitable training courses, before searching the Learning and Development directory of courses. Once you have registered via the online application form you will receive joining instructions from the Learning and Development team

✉ kinship@hullcc.gov.uk

☎ 01482 612 800

🌐 www.hull.gov.uk/LearningandDevelopment

Hull Virtual School

✉ cypfs-virtualschool@hullcc.gov.uk

☎ 01482 615 606

🌐 www.hull.gov.uk/hullvirtualschool The Hull Virtual School supports and advises all those involved in the education of children in care or previously in care, or children with a social worker

Emotional and Therapeutic Support

Children in kinship care may require additional emotional or therapeutic support to help them process past experiences and build a positive sense of identity and belonging. Services working with children, young people and carers in Hull are committed to offering trauma-informed support; this means that professionals recognise the impact of trauma, understand paths for recovery, and work hard to create safe, trustworthy environments.

Signs you might need this support.

- the child is anxious, withdrawn or struggling with behaviour.
- there has been trauma, loss or disruption in relationships.
- you are finding it difficult to understand or respond to the child's needs.
- school is reporting emotional or behavioural concerns.

Support may include life story work, therapeutic assessments and interventions delivered through internal or commissioned services, and identity focused work that helps children understand their experiences. Emotional and therapeutic support can also be available following permanence, including for children subject to Adoption Orders or Special Guardianship Orders, through adoption and special guardianship support services and access to the Adoption Support Fund where need is identified.

You can ask for support even if the child is not looked after by the local authority. Support should be based on the child's needs.

How to access support

- Speak to your social worker (if involved)
- Contact the Kinship Care Team for advice and guidance.
- Speak to your GP, school or other professionals who can help refer or signpost.

Support to children, young people and their families may be available depending on circumstances, from a number of agencies:

 www.connect.humber.nhs.uk/a-z-of-services The A-Z of Services has details of all NHS services available for children and young people.

 www.mind.org.uk/need-urgent-help/using-this-tool/ For emotional support and advice at an earlier stage, the charity Mind has lots of useful resources.

 www.connect.humber.nhs.uk/service/my-mental-health-support-team-mymhst For early intervention support options offered by the NHS within schools.

Specialist emotional and mental health support for children, young people and their kinship carers from the Hull and East Riding Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.

 www.connect.humber.nhs.uk/service/camhs-children-looked-after-team For children and young people cared for by Kinship Foster Carers - referrals to this team must be made by a Social Worker.

 www.connect.humber.nhs.uk/service/hull-east-riding-community-core-camhs For children and young people cared for under all other Kinship Care arrangements (not cared for by Kinship Foster Carers)

Education Support

Support is available to help children in kinship care feel supported, included and able to succeed at school.

Hull City Council recognises the importance of educational stability and success for children living in kinship care. Work with schools focuses on increasing awareness of kinship care and ensuring that children are visible and supported within education settings, including through partnership with the Virtual School.

Carers are offered rights-based guidance, support with school transitions and access to SEND pathways where needed. Inclusion support and transition planning help address barriers to learning and promote positive engagement with education.

What you should tell the school

Sharing this information helps the school understand the child's needs and respond appropriately:

- is living in a kinship care arrangement.
- has experienced loss, trauma or changes in care.
- may need additional emotional or learning support.
- has had disruption to their education or moved school.

What you can do now

- Ask to speak to the designated teacher – they are responsible for supporting children who may need additional help due to their circumstances.
- Ask what support is available, including pastoral care, SEND support or adjustments in school.
- Stay in contact with the school and ask for updates on the child's progress and wellbeing.

Supporting the child's education

Kinship carers may receive support with practical aspects of children's education to promote stability and inclusion:

- Advice and support with school admissions, including priority arrangements where applicable.
- Help may include support with attendance, behaviour, transitions and emotional wellbeing.
- The Virtual School can provide advice and support to schools and carers.
- Access to free school meals and help understanding eligibility.
- Support with home to school transport where criteria are met.
- Personal Education Plans and involvement from the Virtual School where the child is eligible.

 www.hull.gov.uk/applications-transfers school admissions

 www.hull.gov.uk/schools-2/free-school-meals free school meals

 www.hull.gov.uk/schools-2/home-school-transport home to school transport

 www.healthyholidayshull.org offers free food and fun activities during Easter, Summer and Winter school holidays to provide opportunities for children and young people across the city.

Virtual School Support

Summary - what you need to know.

They work closely with schools, social care and other services to provide coordinated support. Where appropriate, they can also advise on additional support and funding.

Who it supports: Primarily children in care, previously in care, and children with a social worker. Advice may also be available more widely.

What it can do: Provide advice to carers and schools, support education planning, and help address barriers to learning. Advises all those involved in the education of children in care or previously in care, or children with a social worker.

How to contact: You can contact the Virtual School directly for advice and support.

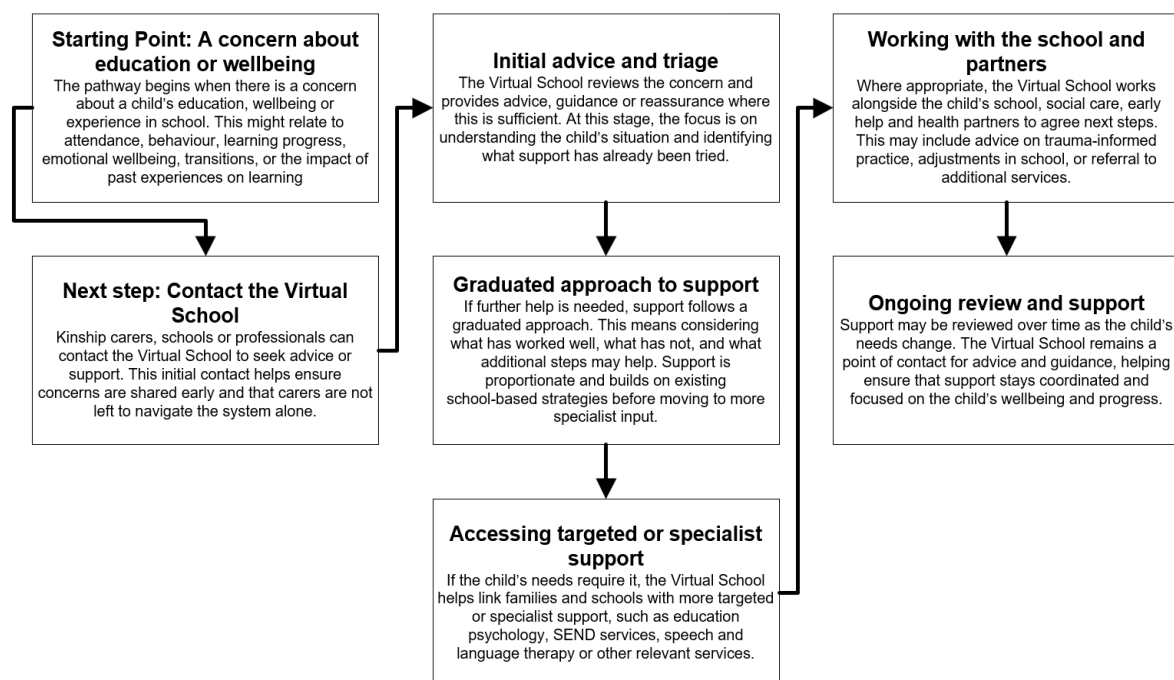
✉ cypfs-virtualschool@hullcc.gov.uk

☎ 01482 615 606

🌐 www.hull.gov.uk/hullvirtualschool

Hull's Virtual School champions the education and wellbeing of children living in kinship care. It has statutory duties to promote the education of certain groups of children, including children in care, previously in care, and children with a social worker. In Hull, the Virtual School may also provide advice and guidance more widely where appropriate.

The Virtual School provides advice and guidance to kinship carers and schools to help children feel safe, understood and supported to succeed in education. This diagram explains how support works for kinship families, showing each step from raising a concern through advice, graduated support and specialist services, and how carers and schools are supported throughout the process.



Support may include advice on:

- school admissions, transfers and transitions.
- attendance, engagement and behaviour
- emotional wellbeing and the impact of trauma on learning
- navigating the education system and accessing appropriate support

Where appropriate, carers and schools may also be supported to develop or review Personal Education Plans (for children who are looked after) or other learning plans so that children's needs are clearly identified and addressed.

Hull's Virtual School works closely with schools, social care, early help and health partners to promote a joined-up approach. Support is informed by a graduated approach to meeting need, ensuring that what has been tried, what has worked and what has not is clearly understood before additional support is introduced. Guidance is provided to schools on trauma-informed education practice and on supporting children who may have experienced loss, disruption or adversity.

Where children are eligible, the Virtual School also provides advice about educational funding, including the Pupil Premium Plus grant. This includes guidance on how the funding can be used to support learning and wellbeing, and how carers can work with the school's designated teacher to ensure it is used effectively.

Kinship carers can contact the Virtual School directly for advice and support. Enquiries are triaged and carers are linked with the most appropriate support, which may include education psychology, SEND services, speech and language therapy or other specialist services, depending on the child's needs.

Connexions

Connexions Hull provides free, impartial information, advice and guidance for young people aged 14–18 (and up to 25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan). The service supports education, training and employment choices, offering one-to-one guidance, advocacy, careers advice, CV support and referrals to specialist services.

✉ connexions@hullcc.gov.uk

☎ 01482 615 223

🌐 www.hull.gov.uk/young-people/young-people-skills-employability-service-ypse

Employment and Work Support

Taking on the care of a child can affect carers' employment, particularly when arrangements are made at short notice. The Kinship Care team provides guidance on flexible working and, where appropriate, advocacy in conversations with employers to help carers balance work and caring responsibilities.

Talk to your employer about:

- Flexible working arrangements (e.g. adjusted hours or home working where possible)
- Time off for emergencies or appointments related to the child.
- Changes to your role or responsibilities to help you manage caring commitments.

National employment support for kinship carers is still developing, and there is currently no statutory paid leave specific to kinship care.

What support the council can provide?

- Advice and guidance on your employment rights and options
- Support in conversations with your employer, where appropriate
- Information about initiatives such as the Kinship Friendly Employers scheme

How to get support

- Speak to the Kinship Care Team for advice.
- Or discuss with your social worker or Kinship Team contact (if involved)

Kinship Friendly Employers Scheme

By joining the 'Foster-Friendly Hull' scheme, employers can make a meaningful difference in the lives of foster carers and children, while also benefiting from increased recognition and community engagement. All eligible entities are invited to become part of this important initiative and help build a foster-friendly Hull.

 hullfostering.co.uk/fostering-friendly Fostering Friendly Employer scheme

Family Time Support for Kinship Carers

Family time between children and their parents or wider family should support the child's safety and wellbeing.

Arrangements may be agreed informally within families or, where the local authority or court is involved, set out in plans or court orders.

If there are concerns about family time, support is available to review arrangements and ensure they are safe and appropriate.

Support may include help to:

- clarify roles and expectations between parents and carers.
- agree and maintain safe, child-focused contact arrangements.
- access mediation or support where relationships are challenging.

How this helps you as a carer

- Reduces conflict and uncertainty, so you can focus on caring for the child.
- Supports stable and consistent contact arrangements, which benefits the child's wellbeing.
- Helps everyone understand their roles, making day-to-day decisions clearer.
- Mediation can improve communication, especially where relationships are strained.

How to access support

- Speak to your social worker (if involved)
- Or contact the Kinship Care Team for advice and guidance.

Transition to Adulthood: Housing Support for Young People in Kinship Care (16+)

Young people in kinship care may need support as they move towards independence. **What support is available depends on your circumstances, for example whether they are looked after by the local authority.**

What to expect over time

- Age 16–17: Planning begins, needs are assessed, and support options are explored.
- Age 18: Legal status changes; housing and financial arrangements may change.
- Up to age 21: Ongoing support may be available depending on circumstances (and up to 25 in some situations for care leavers)

For young people aged 16+ in kinship care, housing support may be given at key transition points into adulthood. There are separate entitlements for care leavers and those who are not looked after. For both groups, support will be regularly reviewed and adapted to reflect each young person's changing needs, ensuring a planned and supported transition to stable, suitable accommodation. Support may be provided through a young person's housing options assessment, delivered by the Young Peoples Housing Support Service.

If the young person is looked after (Care leavers)

The council will meet its duties under the Children Act 1989 and Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 by ensuring all eligible, "relevant" and "former relevant" young people have a pathway plan that prioritises safe, suitable accommodation.

Their housing needs will be assessed through a holistic pathway planning process, considering independence skills, support needs, and risks. They will receive coordinated support from Leaving Care and the Young Peoples Housing Support Service, including access to suitable accommodation, advice, financial support, and ongoing help to sustain tenancies, in line with duties under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

Staying Put Arrangements

Kinship carers may be supported to continue caring for a young person after the age of 18 through a Staying Put arrangement, where the young person meets the eligibility criteria for Staying Put arrangements (which usually includes having been a looked-after child for a qualifying period).

Under a Staying Put arrangement, the young person is no longer a looked after child, and the arrangement is no longer governed by fostering regulations. The council will provide support to help maintain the arrangement, which may continue until the young person reaches age 21 (or longer in some circumstances where they remain in education or training).

Financial considerations

At age 18, fostering payments cease and financial arrangements change. Support for Staying Put arrangements may include a combination of local authority financial support, contributions towards household costs, and access to benefits where appropriate.

Entitlement to benefits and financial support will depend on individual circumstances, including the relationship between the carer and the young person. Financial

arrangements are agreed on a case-by-case basis to support stability and ensure that young people and carers are not disadvantaged.

Leaving Care Support

When a young person in care turns 18, they become a “former relevant” young person and are entitled to support from the Leaving Care Service.

This includes:

- an allocated Personal Adviser (PA)
- regular pathway plans and support through the Leaving Care local offer setting out their accommodation, education, employment and support needs.
- ongoing advice, support and practical assistance

The Personal Adviser becomes the main point of contact and works with the young person to support their transition to adulthood, whether they remain in a Staying Put arrangement or move towards independent living.

Leaving Care Hull

✉ leaving.care@hullcc.gov.uk

☎ 01482 615 650

🌐 www.leavingcarehull.org.uk further guidance on housing support for Care Leavers and Staying Put arrangements

If the young person is not “looked after”

Support will be based on an individual needs assessment, considering living arrangements, support networks, and vulnerability to homelessness.

Young people will be provided with individually tailored advice and support on their housing options, assistance with applications and wider independent skills development, and access to a range of supported housing services where eligible.

Where required, multi-agency support will be coordinated by the Young Peoples Housing Support Service to help young people prepare for and sustain independent living, with a focus on early intervention and prevention.

Support for this group will also be regularly reviewed and adapted to reflect changing needs, ensuring a planned transition to stable and suitable accommodation.

Housing Support for Kinship Carers

Contact us as soon as housing becomes a problem. Early support can help prevent situations from becoming more difficult or reaching crisis point.

Common situations where we can help.

Overcrowding - your home is too small to safely accommodate the child or sibling group.

Risk of homelessness - you are at risk of losing your home or cannot stay where you are.

Needing a bigger or more suitable home - you need to move to provide stable and appropriate care.

Hull City Council recognises that housing can be a complex issue for kinship carers, particularly where existing accommodation is insufficient to care for a child or sibling group, leading to overcrowding and additional pressures. Kinship carers are encouraged to notify the Council as early as possible where housing may jeopardise an arrangement. Hull City Council will ensure joined up working across departments, recognising the vital role of kinship carers, by:

- Providing advice on housing rights and rehousing options, including signposting to independent housing support where needed
- Supporting kinship carers in social housing to explore more suitable accommodation, including mutual exchange opportunities
- Considering adaptations were assessed as reasonable, viable, and funded, where this would prevent a child from becoming looked after.

Housing and Children's Services work closely together, particularly where support is considered under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989. If financial support is considered the most appropriate way to safeguard and promote a child's welfare, this may include:

- One-off payments to help set up a home (e.g. furniture, safety equipment)
- In some cases, assistance with rental deposits or rent arrears to prevent homelessness.

Kinship carers may also face other problems because of welcoming a child(ren) into the home such as anti-social behaviour, financial hardship or, for a Kinship Carer who is also the child's sibling the placement may result in the Carer themselves living independently for the first time. Where a Kinship carer is also a Hull City Council tenant, Hull City Council's Tenancy Sustainment Service can provide advice and support around:

- Accessing local services
- Employment and training advice
- Benefits advice
- Developing independent living skills
- Support settling into a new tenancy and neighbourhood.
- Money management, including debt.
- Understanding and maintaining tenancy agreements

Self-referrals (or referrals by a support worker) can be made via the Council's call centre on 01482 300 300.

The Housing Access Service provides advice as follows:

Homeless or at risk of homelessness

 Mon–Fri, 9am–4.30pm 01482 612 040

 www.hull.gov.uk/homelessness provides online advice and a self-referral form

 01482 300 300 for those unable to use the online form

 Emergency out of hours 01482 300 304, if there is nowhere safe to stay that night

Rehousing advice

 www.hull.gov.uk/find-home-1 provides online advice on types of available housing, finding a suitable home and registering to bid for a home

 Mon–Fri, 9am–4.30pm 01482 300 300

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and Kinship

Children in kinship care can access support through Hull's SEND Local Offer if they have special educational needs or disabilities.

You may be able to access SEND support even if you are not the child's parent. Kinship carers are recognised as the child's primary carer for accessing services.

Support is based on the child's needs, not the legal arrangement, and is designed to provide continuity and consistency.

What support may include?

- access to SEND assessments and support plans (Education, Health and Care Plans)
- short breaks and additional services for children with disabilities
- coordinated support across education, health and social care.

How to get support (first steps)

- Speak to the child's school or SENCO.
- Contact the SEND Local Offer or relevant services.
- If professionals are involved, speak to your social worker or Kinship Team contact.

Where safeguarding concerns or additional needs are identified, appropriate referral routes (e.g. Early Help and Safeguarding Hub) will be used to ensure support is coordinated effectively.

Hull's SEND Local Offer provides information on support available to children with special educational needs and disabilities. Kinship carers are recognised as primary carers for the purposes of SEND support and access to services. Support follows the child, not the legal caring arrangement, ensuring continuity.

 www.hullsendlocaloffer.org.uk The Local Offer for children with special educational needs or disabilities.

 www.kids.org.uk A charity for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and their families.

 www.hullparentcarerforum.co.uk An independent group of parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in Hull.

 www.sendiass.org **S**pecial **E**ducational **N**eeds and **D**isabilities **I**nformation and **A**dvice and **S**upport **S**ervice, offers free, confidential, accurate and impartial advice to families with SEND children and young people 0 to 25

Legal Support

Kinship arrangements can involve complex legal responsibilities, and parental responsibility may sit with the kinship carer, the child's parents or the local authority, depending on the legal arrangement in place. Hull City Council works closely with legal services to help ensure that kinship carers understand the legal options available to them and the implications of different routes.

You may need legal advice if:

- a child comes to live with you unexpectedly.
- you are considering a court order (e.g. Child Arrangements Order or Special Guardianship Order)
- there are disagreements about who should care for the child.
- the local authority is considering legal proceedings.
- you want to understand your rights and responsibilities as a carer.

What support we provide?

Support includes clear explanations of legal orders, funded assessments where required, and post-order planning to help carers understand how arrangements may affect education, finances and emotional wellbeing. Kinship carers may need legal advice to understand their rights and responsibilities, court processes and the long-term implications of legal orders.

Getting further advice

Where appropriate, carers may be signposted to independent legal advice, national kinship organisations and advocacy or guidance services to help them make informed decisions and feel confident in their role.

 www.kinship.org.uk/support-and-advice/advice-and-information/legal-advice-for-kinship-carers

Section 3:

Looking Forward

This section sets out how Hull will ensure the Kinship Local Offer is delivered effectively, improved over time and informed by the experiences of families. It brings together governance, accountability, feedback and complaints, showing how services are monitored and how learning is used to strengthen practice.

It is aimed at kinship carers, children and young people, and professionals who want to understand how services are held to account and how they can contribute to improvement.

\This section is useful for understanding how decisions and services are overseen, how to raise concerns or provide feedback, and how Hull ensures that the Local Offer is embedded in practice rather than existing as a standalone document. It reflects a commitment to transparency, continuous improvement and partnership working, ensuring that support for kinship families remains consistent, responsive and focused on outcomes for children.



Accountability

The Kinship Local Offer sits within the wider governance and quality assurance arrangements of Children's Services. Senior managers regularly review services to make sure kinship families get the support they need, ensuring that kinship care remains central to Hull's family-first approach and that there is a clear focus on outcomes, permanence and stability. Practitioners working with kinship families are expected to understand the Local Offer and apply it consistently.

Delivery is supported through:

- regular performance monitoring and audit, this includes oversight of kinship placement stability, disruption and permanence outcomes, through performance dashboards, audit programmes, and service reviews.
- review of permanency planning and decision-making
- service evaluation and improvement activity.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that:

- the Local Offer is understood and applied in practice.
- staff are supported through training and supervision, including training in relational and trauma-informed practice.
- decisions relating to kinship care are timely and proportionate.
- there is active oversight of kinship arrangements, including regular review of plans, identification of risk, and challenge where progress is unclear or insufficient

Together, these arrangements are intended to ensure that the Local Offer is not simply a document but is embedded in everyday practice and contributes to consistent, high-quality support for families.

Complaints

Hull City Council is committed to working in partnership with kinship carers and to learning from concerns, feedback and complaints in order to improve practice. Kinship carers have the right to raise concerns or make a complaint about the support they receive and are encouraged to do so if they feel something is not working or needs to be addressed.

Concerns may be raised informally in the first instance by contacting the relevant team or practitioner, where early resolution will be prioritised wherever possible. Kinship carers can also access the council's formal complaints process if they wish to pursue a complaint or are not satisfied with the response they receive. Complaints processes are designed to be clear, accessible, fair and transparent.

Raising a concern or making a complaint will not affect a kinship carer's access to services or future support. Hull views complaints and feedback as an important part of its learning culture and as an opportunity to strengthen services for kinship families.

✉ CYPs.Complaints@hullcc.gov.uk

☎ 01482 300 300

🌐 <https://www.hull.gov.uk/downloads/file/338/complaints-procedure>

 <https://www.hull.gov.uk/complaints-feedback/childrens-families-feedback>

Feedback and Improving Services

A Living Document

The Local Offer will continue to evolve through:

- feedback from families and practitioners
- participation activity with children and young people
- performance monitoring and quality assurance

Feedback and Improving Services

We want to understand your experience and use your feedback to improve support for kinship families in Hull.

You can give feedback at any time by:

- speaking to your social worker or Kinship Team contact
- contacting the Kinship Care Team directly
- using the council's feedback or complaints process

You do not need to wait for a review or meeting to share your views.

What you can expect from us:

- We will listen to your feedback and take it seriously.
- We will respond to you within a reasonable timescale and explain what will happen next.
- We will use feedback to improve services and practice.
- We will share changes where possible, so you can see how your feedback has made a difference.

Continuous Improvement

Feedback from carers, children and young people is regularly reviewed alongside performance and quality assurance activity.

The Local Offer will be reviewed regularly and updated to reflect changes in services and emerging needs. Feedback to improve support and practice will be sought through existing co-development arrangements within the wider Hull Families First Partnership.

Hull City Council monitors the impact of its kinship support through performance data, quality assurance activity, and feedback from children and families. This ensures that services continue to improve and respond to the needs of kinship carers.

 kinship@hullcc.gov.uk

 01482 612 800

 www.hull.gov.uk/complaints-feedback/childrens-families-feedback

Final Note

Hull City Council recognises the vital role that kinship carers play in providing children with stability, security, and a sense of belonging. This Local Offer sets out how we work alongside families to support children to remain safely within their family networks wherever possible.

Our approach is based on strong relationships, early support and involving families in decisions through family-led planning. We know that families' needs change over time, and we are committed to responding flexibly and working in partnership to help arrangements succeed.

This Local Offer will continue to grow and develop, shaped by feedback from children, young people, carers, and professionals. By listening and working together, we aim to ensure that every child in Hull has the opportunity to grow in a safe, supportive and connected family environment.



Version 1.0, July 2026
Children and Family Services
Hull City Council

The information in this document can be made available in other formats. Call 01482 300 300.