

IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION

Date and Time:- Tuesday 17 June 2025 at 10.00 a.m.

Venue:- Rotherham Town Hall, The Crofts, Moorgate Street, Rotherham. S60 2TH

Membership:- Councillors Monk (Chair), Brent (Vice-Chair) Adair, Blackham, Bower, T. Collingham, Elliott, Fisher, Garnett, Harper, Hughes, Ismail, Pitchley, Reynolds, Ryalls, Sutton.

This meeting will be webcast live and will be available to view [via the Council's website](#). The items which will be discussed are described on the agenda below and there are reports attached which give more details.

Rotherham Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair or Governance Advisor of their intentions prior to the meeting.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive the apologies of any Member who is unable to attend the meeting.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 3 - 9)

To consider and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 April 2025, as a true and correct record of the proceedings and to be signed by the Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of interest from Members in respect of items listed on the agenda.

4. Exclusion of the Press and Public

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any part of the agenda.

5. Questions from Members of the Public and the Press

To receive questions relating to items of business on the agenda from members of the public or press who are present at the meeting.

6. The Draft Kinship Local Offer (Pages 10 - 46)

In October 2024, the Government issued statutory guidance on 'Kinship Care', which included a requirement for each local authority to publish a Kinship Local Offer.

The requirement is that each local authority is expected to publish the Kinship Local Offer within two months of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools bill becoming law. The Draft Local Offer will be presented to the Commission for pre-decision scrutiny, ahead of being presented to Cabinet for approval in July 2025.

7. Nomination for Health, Welfare and Safety Panel (Pages 47 - 48)

To seek a representative from the Improving Lives Select Commission (ILSC) to sit as a member on the Health, Welfare and Safety Panel.

8. Work Programme

To consider the Commission's Work Programme.

9. Improving Lives Select Commission - Sub and Project Group Updates

For the Chair/Project Group Leads to provide an update on the activity regarding sub and project groups of the Improving Lives Select Commission.

10. Urgent Business

To consider any item(s) the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.

**The next meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission
will be held on Tuesday 22 July 2025
commencing at 10.00 a.m.
in Rotherham Town Hall.**



SHARON KEMP OBE,
Chief Executive.

IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION
Tuesday 22 April 2025

Present:- Councillor Monk (in the Chair); Councillors Baggaley, Brent, Elliott, Fisher, Garnett, Harper, Ryalls and Currie.

Apologies for Absence:- Apologies were received from Councillors Pitchley, Knight, Bower, Foster, Hughes and Sutton.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-
<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

68. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved: - That the Minutes of the meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission, held on 4 March 2025, be approved as a correct record of proceedings.

69. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

70. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items of business on the agenda that required the exclusion of the press and public from the meeting.

71. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from members of the public or press.

72. DOMESTIC ABUSE STRATEGY 2022-2027 PROGRESS UPDATE

The item provided an update on the progress towards the Rotherham Domestic Abuse Strategy 2022-2027, following the previous update presented to the Commission in 2023.

The Chair welcomed to the meeting Councillor Cusworth, the Cabinet Member for Children's and Young People's Services who attended the meeting to introduce the report in absence of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Safe and Clean Communities, Emma Ellis, Head of Service for Community Safety and Regulatory Services, Andrew Wells, Head of Safeguarding, Kayleigh Charlton, Community Safety Officer and Kelly

White, LINK Officer for the Commission and Assistant Director for Early Help.

The Chair invited Councillor Cusworth to introduce the report, during which the following was noted:

- The strategy was a working document that was amended frequently to highlight any emerging challenges.
- There had been good progress against the strategy, examples were provided of the targeted campaigns completed towards older populations and seasonal awareness relating to Christmas and football tournaments, which had been running for several years.
- Prevention and education were key parts of the strategy, as well as ensuring a trauma informed approach to services.

The Chair invited the relevant officers to provide the presentation, during which the following was noted:

- Part of the Strategy included the commissioning of domestic abuse services and in October 2022 this process was changed. Rotherham Rise now named Hopian, were commissioned to manage the front door services and high-risk cases, alongside the refuge provision. The in-house service known as the Domestic Abuse Outreach Service (DAAOS), was located in the Safeguarding Service.
- Since the development of the strategy in 2022 and by the end of 2024, 81% of actions were complete.

Drive Change Together-

- The DASH was reformed, to provide better direction around completion and make it more user friendly, and better guidance on how to use it to manage the risk of a victim.
- Eight Steps to Homicide training was commissioned to enhance practitioners' knowledge when assessing risk to a victim, the training also looked at perpetrator's behaviours around key triggers and indicators of escalation.
- There was strengthened data collection, to identify any gaps for campaigns and projects. Key campaigns such as the Domestic Abuse Summer Campaign and Domestic Abuse Older People's

Campaign, were created to challenge unconscious bias around stereotypical victims.

- Non-fatal strangulation training and targeted Health professional training was completed with over 500 GPs and health practitioner. The training was in-line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 by recognising that non-fatal strangulation was a standalone crime. Non-fatal strangulation training was delivered to front line practitioners to ensure they would have the tools to spot the signs and refer for support.

Prevention and Early Intervention-

- The 'Do More' Campaign was launched, which followed on from the 'No More' Campaign. The campaign called for all male bystanders to stop abusive and misogynistic behaviours towards women and girls.
- The Walk Safe App was launched across South Yorkshire to ensure people, in-particular women would feel safer. The app had a tracking feature so trusted friends and family could ensure that a person had got to their intended location safely. It also plotted registered safe places, so routes could be planned with those places in mind.
- An Unpicking Cultural Narratives Workshop was developed alongside Sheffield Hallam University to focus on prevention and early intervention. The university delivered the workshop based on what could be perceived as a victim, focusing on the word 'vulnerable' and changing the narrative that vulnerability was a sign of courage and strength rather than a weakness.
- A new training plan for 2024-2025 had been developed with a four-tiered approach. This would ensure that domestic abuse awareness training would be delivered to all who required it, at the right level. Training would include 'asking the question' and 'risk assessing' and would be delivered at various times across the year.

Minimising Harm Via the Provision of Early Help Support for Children, Young People and Families-

- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 stated that children were victims in their own right. A wide scope of support was offered to children experiencing domestic abuse.
- Operation Encompass in conjunction with South Yorkshire Police

led to 100% of schools being signed up within the borough, plus 53 nurseries. South Yorkshire Police advised there would be a national review of Operation Encompass, to look how processes could be enhanced.

- High Risk incidents were increasing due to better reporting and better professional understanding of risk. However, in order to ensure safety, the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) had increased from two meetings per month to three. This had reduced a back log of nine weeks to four weeks.

Responding to Changing Need and Demand-

- There were thirteen specialist domestic abuse properties, which were fully furnished and equipped with target hardening essentials. The properties had supported thirty-five adults and thirty-nine children this year to date, including those still in residence.
- There were ten commissioned refuge units and ten commissioned safer options properties.
- The Homelessness Prevention Fund helped to provide essential funds to 153 families in 2024-2025. Examples were provided of how the fund had purchased essential household items, helped with moving costs and had paid rent arrears to prevent homelessness again.
- Target hardening was provided for 142 properties, to enable survivors to remain safely in their own home.

The Next Steps-

- The partnership would aim to develop a better understanding of the family court process and continue to work in partnership to identify the need for direct support for children.
- Work would continue to develop a Survivor Liaison Network, alongside the continuation of training monitoring, and ensuring that a wide range of domestic abuse training would be available to all partners.
- Work would continue to implement and monitor performance and interrogate data to inform any gaps in knowledge or provision.
- Work would continue with Commissioning, to complete the

Domestic Abuse Pathway Review.

The Chair thanked the relevant officer for the presentation and opened up to questions, during which the following discussions took place:

- Members raised concerns around potential online cultures linked to misogyny and asked officers whether this could form part of any future revised strategy. Re-assurance was provided that this was an area where work was delivered in school settings during PHSE lessons. The Safer Rotherham Partnership Priorities had a specific focus on online crime and included areas such as domestic abuse, knife crime, Prevent and healthy relationships. An example was provided of the Do More Campaign and how the campaign encouraged people not to be a bystander and to challenge certain behaviours.
- The Cranstoun Level Up Programme had received a high number of referrals from one particular school, which had led the data on referrals to peak. This was attributed to targeted work that the service had completed and it was advised that it was common for referrals to increase when strong intervention work was completed. The service saw this as a positive impact of the outreach and engagement completed with schools and communities.
- In relation to the 81% of actions that were completed by the end of 2024, the remaining actions were future actions, which focused on the survivor voice and ensuring that it would be captured better in future.
- A Domestic Homicide Review was a statutory function that was completed in any case where an individual had lost their life as a result of a domestic incident. The review sat alongside Safeguarding Adults Reviews and a near-miss process. The service continually learned from reviews and changed practises and processes to ensure improvements.
- The legislation relating to domestic abuse used the term homicide, however work was being completed to change this to domestic abuse related deaths. This would cover all domestic abuse and suicides where domestic abuse had been present.
- Member's raised concerns that the PowerPoint presented to the Commission only included one visual promotion of a male, which was a poster of a perpetrator. Members advised that they would welcome more promotional posters which highlighted the message

that men were also victims of domestic abuse.

- All data relating to domestic abuse, including the relevant dashboard and action plan, was presented to the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Priority Group, which was a sub-group of the Safer Rotherham Partnership. The group was chaired by the Head of Community and Safety Regulatory Services.
- In relation to the 20% of referrals for domestic abuse support that did not engage with support services, it was clarified that this only measured the non-engagement with Hopian and not wider services. Hopian would attempt three phone calls, send a follow up text and a letter if safe to do so. The national average was that it could take up to fifty incidents for victims of domestic abuse to engage in support.
- There was a designated Community Safety Officer who was responsible for promoting the Walk Safe App, this included promotion with schools.
- The data on referral numbers into the Inspire to Change Course had decreased; this was attributed to the service previously receiving a lot of inappropriate referrals, such as referrals of individuals who did not want to complete the course, or who were not ready to join. The course was 26 weeks in total and required engagement from attendee's, therefore the screening processes were updated to ensure the right referrals were received and included individuals who had the desire and motivation to change. It was advised that the success of the course could not be measured solely on how many people completed the course, success also included what individuals had learned from the course even if they hadn't fully completed it.

Resolved: - That the Improving Lives Select Commission:

- 1) Consider the progress towards the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2022 – 2027.
- 2) Requests that the eight steps to homicide PowerPoint to be circulated to the Commission.

73. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered its Work Programme, and the following was noted:

- The work programme for 2024-2025 municipal year was complete and a new work programme would be drafted with the Commission at the beginning of the next municipal year.
- Members were reminded that upon completion of the meeting, there would be a scoping session for the Commission to scope a proposed review on Trauma and Children Missing Education.
- Members were also reminded that there would be an additional workshop held on the 1 May, further details had been circulated via email.

Resolved: - That the Work Programme for 2024-2025 be approved.

74. IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION - SUB AND PROJECT GROUP UPDATES

There were no sub and project group updates.

75. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

BRIEFING	TO:	Improving Lives Select Commission
	DATE:	17 th June 2025
	LEAD OFFICER:	Chris MacDonald Service Manager Central Locality, Children and Young People’s Services
	TITLE:	Kinship Local Offer – Pre-Decision Scrutiny
1. Background		
1.1	In October 2024, the Government issued statutory guidance on ‘Kinship Care’, which included a definition (now enshrined in the draft Children’s Wellbeing and Schools bill before Parliament) of kinship care: ‘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’. This covers a wide span from informal arrangements and private fostering, to Children in Care fostered by family or friends, and children subject to Court orders proving their family or friends with parental responsibility.	
1.2	The October 2024 statutory guidance requires that each local authority publishes a Kinship Local Offer. It also extends the role of the Virtual School Head to champion the attainment, attendance and progress of children in kinship care, and extends the role of the Virtual School to provide advice and information to kinship carers. Within the Children’s Wellbeing and Schools bill, both the expectation of the local offer and the role of the Virtual School Head are included. A senior manager must be nominated to ensure the kinship local offer meets statutory requirements and that it is responsive to the needs of kinship children and their carers.	
1.3	The priority for kinship care sits firmly in Government’s <i>Stable Homes Built on Love</i> and the Children’s Social Care National Framework which expects that children are supported by their family network. The Families First Partnership programme guide similarly highlights the critical role of family group decision-making at all stages of a child’s journey through the service.	
1.4	There is a firm legal foundation through Children Act 1989 and subsequent regulations, statutory guidance and case law that children should be raised within their families wherever it is consistent with their welfare to do so, and that it is incumbent on the Council to do what it can to make this possible.	
1.5	Supporting extended family and friends to care for children and young people when their parents are unable to do so has been a consistent pillar of the Council’s successful long-term strategy to reduce the numbers of children who come into care and the Council is committed to continually improve on this offer.	
2. Key Issues		
2.1	The statutory guidance sets out that the Kinship Local Offer must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Set out services available to each kinship arrangement.	

- Provide support based on the needs of kinship children rather than legal status.
- Be developed in collaboration with partner agencies.
- Be well-publicised.
- Mitigate against potential barriers to accessing support.

2.2 The Kinship Local Offer is expected to address:

- Support groups and training.
- Financial support.
- Help to stay in work.
- Accommodation.
- Education.
- Supporting family time.
- Family group decision making.
- Legal support.
- Therapeutic support.

2.3 Each area in the statutory guidance is addressed within the Kinship Local Offer.

2.4 Research shows that kinship carers find it difficult to navigate services and some benefit from a direct relationship with a professional with specific expertise in the needs of kinship families. There is also evidence that kinship carers can become excluded from mainstream and community services.

2.5 As part of the revised offer, a Virtual Kinship Hub will be established within the Integrated Front Door, with Family Help Navigators who will act as the first point of contact for kinship carers. The Navigators will be specialised in the Kinship Local Offer and provide advice and guidance to kinship carers and professionals working with kinship carers. The Navigators will facilitate support groups and peer networks for kinship carers and their kinship children. Signposting and referrals to other agencies will be provided, with a direct route into the Family Group Conferencing service in order that all kinship families can request a Family Group Conference.

2.6 Where kinship families need targeted help, this will be led by a lead professional from a partner agency or from Family Help, with the continued support of the Family Help Navigators who are specialised in kinship care.

2.7 Where kinship families need help to meet complex emotional needs for a kinship child, the Empower service will have a dedicated offer to kinship families to either work directly with them or assess eligibility for an application for the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund, with the aim of providing help and intervention to stabilise circumstances at home and support an attuned carer-child relationship.

3. Key Actions and Timelines

3.1 The Council is expected to publish the Kinship Local Offer within two months of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools bill becoming law.

3.2 Cabinet will be asked to approve the Kinship Local Offer on 07.07.25.

3.3 Once the Kinship Local Offer has had formal approval, it will be published online as a document and as an interactive website, with a lead-in time of four weeks for the website to be built. It is the responsibility of the named senior manager for kinship to ensure it is accurate and regularly updated.

3.4	The Kinship Local Offer will be dynamic and be updated, at least annually but more frequently during this transitional period for service provision.
3.5	The statutory guidance for Kinship Care and the Council's obligations in the Kinship Local Offer were considered at Improving Lives Select Commission in March 2025. CYPS was asked to return to Improving Lives Select Commission in June 2025 with a draft of the Kinship Local Offer for pre-decision scrutiny.
4. Recommendations	
4.1	<p>Improving Lives Select Commission is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Consider the content of the draft Kinship Local Offer and associated presentation and acknowledge the updates to practice. (ii) Consider the content of the Kinship Local Offer and advise on the accessibility of the language in the offer.

Kinship Local Offer

Rotherham MBC

DRAFT

Rotherham
Metropolitan
Borough Council



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The external advice, activities and support in the Local Offer have not been commissioned by the Council. Advice and information are the responsibility of those organisations. No safety or quality checks have been undertaken by the Council regarding the activities. It is the responsibility of kinship carers to ensure that any activity and location meets your requirements of suitability, safety and accessibility as the Council cannot provide assurances to that effect.

The Kinship Local Offer will be reviewed annually and subject to updates in line with changes in legislation, policy or service delivery.

1. Introducing Kinship Care

Kinship care is defined 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’.

This could happen due to worries about a child’s safety or welfare, and there may be social workers involved. In other circumstances, parents make informal agreements with family or friends about who will look after the child. These different circumstances can also change what support is available and it can change the legal status of the children.

Rotherham’s Kinship Local Offer is here to help any kinship carer find help and support.

Where to start

Our support to kinship carers and their children is provided through our Post-Special Guardianship (SGO) Order Service. Our practitioners can be contacted on 01709 82268 inside working hours, or through the online form on the website:

[Post Special Guardianship Order Service – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

We are changing our services to be responsive to all kinship carers, and we recognise that kinship carers need a single point of contact to help them navigate the local offer and all the help and support available. We plan to reorganise so that Family Help Navigators, specialising in kinship, based in our Front Door will be the first point of contact for kinship carers who need help and advice. This will replace the Post-SGO Service as the primary point of contact. We will update the Kinship Local Offer in due course.

We know that it can be a rewarding but challenging experience being a kinship carer or special guardian.

Kinship carers can get support at any point through their kinship journey. Please get in touch with our team, either through the Post-SGO Service or our Family Help teams if you feel you need support, advice or just someone to talk to.

Kinship is a charity that support kinship carers. Their guide to preparing to be a kinship carer is here: [How to prepare for becoming a kinship carer - Kinship](#).

Family Rights Group also has a guide to kinship care and what it involves: [Kinship care - Family Rights Group](#)

There are a range of services available to families. The services which are specific to kinship families or which are most likely to benefit kinship families are detailed in this Kinship Local Offer, but Rotherham Council also have a family service directory which outlines a number of services for all families in Rotherham. This is available below:

[Family Services Directory – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

2. Types of kinship care

There are different forms of kinship care. The type of Kinship Care you offer depends on how the child came to live with you, whether they are a 'child in care', and whether you have parental responsibility or not.

Parental responsibility is what allows a parent or carer to make important decisions for children. **Kinship** has an explainer on parental responsibility: [How do I obtain parental responsibility for the child I am caring for? - Kinship](#)

Kinship carers may be caring for children through:

- Informal arrangements or private fostering
- Testamentary guardianship
- Child Arrangements Order
- Special Guardianship Order
- Fostering as a connected person

Kinship has a guide to all these different forms of kinship care; how these arrangements are made and what they mean:

[What is kinship care? - Kinship](#)

Family Rights Group also have guides to the legal types of kinship care and what duties exist for local authorities:

[Kinship care - Family Rights Group](#)

[Advice Sheets - Family Rights Group](#)

Rotherham Council has Kinship Care Practice Guidance which sets out all our commitments to kinship carers.

3. Assessments

Informal kinship care

If you are caring for a kinship child with their parents' agreement and you are a close relative, you do not need to inform us. This does not mean you can't come to us for advice and support. If you contact us, we can help to signpost you to any of the services in this Local Offer.

If you need an assessment of need, we may complete a Family Assessment of Need through our Family Help teams.

Private fostering

Private fostering occurs when a parent makes arrangements for their child to be cared for by someone other than themselves for more than 28 days. This includes extended family (for example a cousin, a great aunt or great uncle, a great grandparent) or a family friend. It does not include close blood relatives such as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or a step-parent.

A child is considered to be anyone under the age of 16, or a disabled young person under 18.

We would complete a private fostering assessment through our Fostering Service. To start this process, please contact us at [Private Fostering | Fostering Rotherham](#)

Kinship foster care

If you wish to care for a child who is a Child in Care, you will likely need to be approved and assessed as a temporary foster carer. The child's social worker would undertake an assessment known as a viability assessment of you.

Kinship has a guide to kinship foster care and what this means: [Kinship foster care - Kinship](#)

In Rotherham, our fostering service will undertake all fostering assessments of kinship carers. You will have a dedicated social worker allocated to you from our Fostering team.

Child Arrangements Order

To care for a kinship child through a Child Arrangements Order, an application must be made to Court.

Only a Court can make Child Arrangements Orders, and it may require a report explaining more about you and your kinship child before it does so.

[Child arrangements orders - Kinship](#)

Special Guardianship Order

To become a Special Guardian, you must be first assessed by a social worker from Rotherham Council, if the child currently lives in Rotherham. You may be approached by the Council for assessment in some circumstances, but you can also contact us to ask to be assessed through approaching the child's social worker, or through the MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) if you think the child does not have a social worker.

[Report a concern about a child or young person – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

Only a Court can make Special Guardianship Orders and it can only make them once it has a copy of the assessment. **Kinship** have produced a guide to Special Guardianship Orders which is available here:

[Special guardianship orders - Kinship](#)

There can be differences in the statutory support for Special Guardians depending on whether your kinship child was a Child in Care previously.

Kinship Care Policy

There is more information about the types of kinship care and our role in any assessments of kinship carers in our Kinship Care Practice Guidance.

4. Help and advice

Our support to Special Guardians and their children is provided through our Post-SGO Service.

Our practitioners can be contacted on 01709 82268 inside working hours, or through the online form on the website:

[Post Special Guardianship Order Service – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

There is also a Facebook group for Special Guardians who are or have been entitled to statutory support from Rotherham Council. It is a private group which the Post Special Guardianship Order service maintains:

[Rotherham SGO Facebook group](#)

Kinship Compass

Kinship has a tool, Kinship Compass, to help kinship carers see some of the services and support available in their area: [In your area - Kinship](#)

Safeguarding concerns

If you are worried about the safety of your kinship child or another child, you can report these concerns or call for advice and guidance from our MASH service.

[Report a concern about a child or young person – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

5. Family Group Decision Making

We know that kinship families can sometimes feel isolated and that sometimes family or friends need someone independent to come in and help them come together and make a plan.

Our Family Group Conferencing service are experts in helping families do this, whether this is at a time when they have a social worker or further into their kinship journey. Find out more below.

[Family Group Conferencing – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

Family Rights Group have a short explainer about Family Group Conferences which is available here: [Family Group Conferences - Family Rights Group](#)

For families who have already got an allocated social worker or Early Help family support worker, we can organise a Family Network Meeting as a quicker alternative which does not involve an independent facilitator. This will still involve bringing the family and friends network together to make a plan.

6. Support groups

There are a range of support groups that will be able to offer you more informal support and advice:

Kinship has a list of local peer support groups here: [Find your nearest peer support group | Kinship](#)

Family Rights Group has a list of local support groups for kinship families here: [Find a Local Kinship Support Group - Family Rights Group](#)

Carer and child meetups

A monthly group for primary school aged children and their carers. This is held at **The Big Apple Play Centre** (Old Sheffield Road, Canklow, Rotherham, S60 1DE) on Wednesdays, 4pm to 6pm.

Rotherham Council pay for each child to eat, and you pay a reduced entry fee. Non-SGO children living within the family are also welcome.

Upcoming dates for 2025

- Wednesday 14 May
- Wednesday 11 June
- Wednesday 16 July

Carer coffee morning and support group

A monthly meet-up held for carers only. Guest speakers are sometimes booked in to share advice and information.

It is held 10am to 12pm on a Thursday at **The Community Room** (up the stairs near the kiosk), Tesco Extra, Drummond St, Rotherham S65 1HY

It is a safe space to meet other carers and chat to staff about any worries and difficulties.

Upcoming dates for 2025:

- Thursday 22 May
- Thursday 19 June
- Thursday 24 July
- Thursday 21 August

- Thursday 25 September
- Thursday 23 October
- Thursday 20 November
- Thursday 11 December

Annual summer picnic

This is a family friendly event the Council runs every year to try and get as many kinship carers and their blended families together.

It is held at Clifton Park as this is central for everyone to get to. Guests bring their own picnics and their own games if they want to. There are also games and treats available for the kids. An alternative venue is available to provide shelter in case of bad weather.

7. Help for kinship carers

There is a range of dedicated support for kinship carers and families available.

Foundations

Foundations, a research organisation looking at the evidence about what works for children and families, has been commissioned by the Department for Education to produce practice guides on kinship support.

Foundations offers Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) for kinship carers who feel stressed and overwhelmed. They have found this support is particularly successful for those who are struggling with emotions and behaviours from their kinship children which they find hard to respond to. You can find out more about accessing this support here: [Kinship Care - Foundations](#)

Talking Therapies

RDaSH offer talking therapies in person, in groups and online for adults who are feeling low, anxious or overwhelmed. This includes Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. Find out more here: [Contact us – NHS Talking Therapies](#)

Anna Freud Centre

The Anne Freud Centre has resources for parents and carers on self-care and a 24/7 crisis messenger for anyone struggling to cope. Find out more below:

- [Self-care for parents and carers | Anna Freud](#)
- [AFC Crisis Messenger | Anna Freud](#)

Qwell

Free, safe and anonymous mental health and wellbeing support for all adults (aged 18+) who are registered with a GP in Rotherham. You can find:

- Helpful articles
- Information on community support
- Opportunities to connect with others and share experiences
- Self-care tips through themed collections
- Online chat with a mental health practitioner

Sign up today at [Qwell \(qwell.io\)](https://qwell.io)

8. Training and support

Empower Service

The Empower Service offer training to all kinship carers, through a 5 week introductory Kinship Training and Support Group. These are 5 two hour, face to face workshops with a focus on caring for children with complex emotional needs. The course will explore trauma stabilisation, attachment, challenging behaviours and how to help, psycho-education and self-care. Booking onto the course will be made via the kinship family's lead professional.

The Empower service will provide help and support to kinship carers based on an assessed need for a specialist stability intervention. This will include assessments and applications for the therapeutic support via the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund.

Fostering

For kinship carers who are temporarily approved (under Regulation 24) as a foster carer or who have been fully approved at Fostering Panel, there is a training offer for all foster carers which kinship foster carers can also access. This changes regularly but the prospectus can be found at: [Local Resources](#).

Kinship

Kinship run a range of training, events and roadshows for kinship carers, held in person regionally and online.

[Free training and events for kinship carers | Kinship](#)

ParentTalk

Action for Children run ParentTalk, which offers advice and resources as well as time to talk to a parenting coach via webchat at specific times. Find out more here: [Parent Talk - Support for Parents from Action For Children](#)

Anna Freud Centre

The Anna Freud Centre has a lot of online resources to help kinship carers, foster carers and adopters think about how trauma can affect how kinship child might behave and relate to others, with advice about how to respond and care.

[Adoptive parents, special guardians, kinship carers and foster carers | Anna Freud](#)

Beacon House

Beacon House is a therapeutic services and trauma team who offer a lot of online resources to help carers understand how developmental trauma might affect a kinship child.

[Beacon House Resources](#)

Family Hubs

Rotherham Family Hubs are a place where all children, young people, and their families can go when they need help, advice, and support. All families can get support across a wide range of areas, including parenting, debt, housing, and health and wellbeing.

There are three Family Hubs and a wider Family Hubs network in Rotherham.

Rotherham has Family Help Outreach and Engagement Workers who deliver Children's Centre activities for families with children aged 0 to 5.

There are lots of different activities and sessions available for all families. This includes new arrival celebration sessions, baby massage, baby first aid, treasure basket sessions, reach, talking tots, toddler yoga, stay and play groups, baby weigh sessions, the PEEP Learning Together Programme and reach, roll and play sessions.

[Rotherham Family Hubs and Best Start in Life – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

Parenting programmes

Rotherham Council has an Evidence-Based Hub which offer parenting programmes across the borough, including:

- Triple P 0-12 – a positive parenting programme for children aged 0 to 12 years
- Teen Triple P – a positive parenting programme for teenagers
- Fearless – supporting parents to manage their child's anxiety
- Timid to Tiger – for anxiety in children aged 9 years or younger
- Stepping Stones – a positive parenting programme for children with additional needs
- Solihull – a parenting programme with a therapeutic approach

Experienced trainers deliver the effective programmes which focus on family life skills, including:

- Healthy communication
- How to have family meetings
- Developing empathy
- Responding to behaviour that challenges

Contact the Evidenced Based Hub for further information by emailing parenting@rotherham.gov.uk or go online to [Activities and Support for Families](#)

Family Help

The Council's Family Help teams support children, young people and families in Rotherham who need more help than universal services such as GPs or school can provide. The Family Help Service can offer

- short term support with a specific problem
- longer term support for increasingly complex issues

Family Help staff will work with you at difficult times so that small problems don't get bigger. They work with children, young people and families to offer support and advice when it's most needed. This includes kinship families.

We can work with you in your local area at one of our centres or even in your home.

All referrals for Family Help are made through the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by calling 01709 336080. A Family Assessment of Need (FAN) will be completed to determine what help and support you and your kinship children need.

There are Facebook pages which are regularly updated with activities and events.

[Early Help – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

Family Help Outreach and Engagement

Outreach and Engagement Workers offer

- Universal Children's Centre activities for children aged 0 to 5 years and their families including toddler groups, baby massage and baby yoga
- Targeted groupwork for young people aged 11 to 16 years such as evening groups for young people focussing on topic work and confidence building
- One-to-one support for young people aged 16 to 18 who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) to help them find a positive destination after leaving school

Family Help Outreach and Engagement Teams are based in Family and Children's Centre Hubs across the borough. Their details are below:

North Team

- Brookfield Family and Children's Centre and Dalton Family and Children's Centre

- Tel: 01709 334458
- Email: earlyhelpnorth@rotherham.gov.uk

Partner offering 0 to 5 services

- Rawmarsh Children's Centre
- Tel: 01709 430420

South Team

- Maltby Stepping Stones Family and Children's Centre and Dinnington Family and Children's Centre
- Tel: 01709 334417
- Email: earlyhelpsouth@rotherham.gov.uk

Partner offering 0 to 5 services

- Aughton Early Years Centre
- Tel: 01709 2872530

Central Team

- Ferham Family and Children's Centre and The Place Family and Children's Centre
- Tel: 01709 336660
- Email: earlyhelpcentral@rotherham.gov.uk

Partner offering 0 to 5 services

- The Arnold Centre
- Tel: 01709 828983

9. Help to stay in work

Kinship carers may start to look after their kinship child with little warning or notice, and there can be a need to take time off work to help their kinship child settle.

There is no statutory kinship leave but some employers are now offering paid kinship leave.

Kinship have produced a guide to time off work for kinship carers which is available here: [Time off work for kinship carers - Kinship](#)

Family Rights Group also have advice on your rights which is available here: [Can kinship carers get parental leave from work when taking on the care of a child? - Family Rights Group](#)

The Department for Education have also produced a guide for employers on Kinship Carers in the Workplace.

[Kinship carers in the workplace](#)

Working Families offers advice to parents and carers on their rights at work.

[Homepage - Working Families](#)

10. Activities and childcare

Rotherham Families Information Service (FIS)

The Families Information Service (FIS) provides free and impartial information and advice on all registered childcare in Rotherham, including:

- Childminders
- Day nurseries
- Pre-schools
- Out of school and holiday clubs

They can also provide information on free early education places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds and the 30 Hours Free Childcare offer for working parents.

Contact the Rotherham Families Information Service:

[Families Information Service](#)

Email: fis@rotherham.gov.uk

Freephone: [0800 0730230](#) or [01709 822429](#)

Families Information Service has a comprehensive directory of childcare providers including breakfast and after school clubs.

[Childminders and childcare providers – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.](#)

Families Information Service contains a Family Activities Directory with comprehensive information about what is on for children and young people locally, including sports clubs, youth clubs and holiday clubs.

[Family Activities Directory – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

Rotherham's SEND Local Offer also collates a list of activities for children.

[SEND Groups – Rotherham SEND Local Offer](#)

Rotherham Council's website also has a list of activities and places to go, and the libraries, parks and neighbourhood hubs have regular events.

- [Places to go and things to do – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

- [List of libraries and neighbourhood hubs – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)
- [Parks – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

A Rothercard is a discount scheme available to many young people including all those aged 16 to 20, and those who are Children in Care.

[Rothercard discount scheme – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

The Families Information Service Facebook page is also a very useful source of information. Go online here: [Rotherham Families Information Service | Rotherham | Facebook](#)

A number of Rotherham providers have also produced videos of their settings. These are really good to give you an idea of the activities that your child will experience in a day care setting.

[Rotherham Families Information Service - YouTube](#)

Rotherham Children's Centres offer a friendly place for you and your kinship child to meet new friends and come along to activities. They offer support with parenting, and looking for work or training.

[Registering with a Family and Children's Centre – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

11. Education

Education and Learning

Information about other education and learning services available in Rotherham is on a dedicated webpage [Education and learning – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#). This includes:

- Elective Home Education - where you choose to take responsibility for your kinship child's education otherwise than at school.
- Child Employment and Performance - If your kinship child has a part time employment or is involved in any productions or shows.
- School Term dates- for all Local Authority Maintained Schools.

Applying for a school

All children are entitled to a full time school place in the September following their fourth birthday, should the parents/ carers preference be for school based education at this point.

Applications for school places can be made at [on the school admissions webpages](#), and you can also find information here about all mainstream schools in Rotherham and their admission arrangements.

All Looked After and previously Looked After Children must be given priority in school admission arrangements and the [School Admission Code](#) explains this in more detail.

We know that choosing and applying for a school place can be a stressful time, support and advice is available from specialist admissions staff and they can be contacted using our online form.

[School admissions enquiry – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

If a placement is refused at your preferred school for your kinship child then you have a right to independent appeal and further information is provided alongside any refusal of a school place.

Rotherham SEND Local Offer

Rotherham's SEND Local Offer is the best place to go for all advice, guidance and signposting on your kinship child's education, especially if your kinship child has Special Educational Needs or has experienced emotional difficulties affecting them in school.

[Education and Childcare – Rotherham SEND Local Offer](#)

The SEND Local Offer has a section explaining graduated response and all the help and support available to children in school. [Education and Health Care Plans – Rotherham SEND Local Offer](#)

The SEND Local Offer includes a directory of local schools on the below webpage:

[Schools – Rotherham SEND Local Offer](#)

Inclusion in School

Some children struggle at times to access the usual school education offer and support is available from a range of teams in Rotherham where this is needed.

Schools will usually be able to work with you to support any difficulties your kinship child is experiencing.

Further details about support, such as a part time timetable and alternative provision, can be found on the SEND Local Offer [Education and Childcare](#) webpage along with useful information about support available if your kinship child is being excluded from school or is finding it difficult to attend.

Educational Psychology Service (EPS)

The Educational Psychology Service is made up of a friendly, diverse team of applied psychologists. They use creative problem-solving approaches to enhance the lives, learning and emotional well-being of children and young people between the ages of 0 and 25.

For more information, please visit the Educational Psychology Service website.

[Rotherham Educational Psychology Service \(rotherham.gov.uk\)](http://rotherham.gov.uk/eps)

Or contact the team via the following methods:

Call: 01709 822580.

Email: Jemma Wilkinson or Joanne Askew – Acting Co-Principal Educational Psychologists: eps@rotherham.gov.uk.

Part-time timetables

All children of compulsory school age should receive a full-time education.

In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable. This must be to meet the individual needs of a pupil and not because a school does not have enough resources, such as the availability of one-to-one support. Everybody involved with the pupil should agree that attending school on a part-time basis is in their best interest.

If a parent does not agree to a part-time timetable, it must not be put in place, or this may be viewed as an unlawful exclusion.

If you believe your child has been unlawfully excluded from school, you should refer to

The SEND Local Offer has more information on part-time timetables below:

[Education and Childcare – Rotherham SEND Local Offer](#)

Virtual School

The Virtual School Headteacher now has a responsibility to champion the attendance, attainment, and progress of all children in kinship care.

Kinship families with a Special Guardianship or Child Arrangements Order, regardless of whether the children were previously in local authority care, will also benefit from advice and information, upon request, from the virtual school to help them navigate the education system.

For more information, advice and guidance, please contact the Virtual School Headteachers by either calling 01709 334610, or emailing Virtual School Headteachers Tina Hohn (Early Years and Primary) or Peter Douglas (Secondary and Post 16) at virtualschool@rotherham.gov.uk

12. Housing

Rotherham Key Choices

Key Choices is Rotherham Council's choice-based lettings scheme. Advice on joining the housing register, how properties are allocated and how to seek a move are all outlined on the Council's website below:

[Look for a council home – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

Shelter

Shelter offer personalised local support, online resources, emergency helpline assistance, and free legal aid for individuals facing housing issues or homelessness.

[Shelter - Housing Advice](#)

Crisis

Crisis offer help and support to anyone facing or at risk of homelessness.

[Homelessness support | Get help for homelessness | Crisis UK](#)

13. Financial support

Some kinship carers will be eligible for an allowance from Children's Services. Others may be able to claim benefits for their kinship child, or make arrangements with the child's parents.

Family Rights Group have a guide to navigating the benefits system with kinship children here: [Kinship care - Family Rights Group](#)

Kinship have also produced explainers as to entitlement to allowances and benefits for each type of kinship care.

[Financial support and benefits for kinship carers - Kinship](#)

Financial allowance

Our policy on which kinship families are eligible for an allowance and how the allowance is calculated is set out within the Kinship Care Policy. We use the DfE's Standardised Means Test Model to calculate our allowances and these are set using the National Fostering Allowance.

Financial advice and sources of assistance

Find information on how to get financial advice and to explore possible sources of assistance on the Council's website below.

Money matters – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

There is also an anonymous and free benefit calculator on the GOV.UK website and on **EntitledTo** website:

- <http://gov.uk/benefits-calculators>
- <http://entitledto.co.uk/>

Independent advice

There are a number of organisations outside of the Council who can help with any money queries you may have.

If you have a question about benefits, work, money, housing problems or something similar, and need help in finding out more about your rights and the options available to you, do consider contacting a local independent advice organisation.

[Find an adviser | AdviceLocal](#)

Citizens Advice Rotherham offers practical up-to-date information and advice that is free, confidential, independent and impartial. Advice can be given in person or over the phone.

[About Us - Citizens Advice Rotherham](#)

Rotherham's SEND Local Offer has advice on benefits and financial support where your kinship child has SEND or a disability.

[Money – Rotherham SEND Local Offer](#)

Grants and debt

Buttle UK Trust offer grants to children and young people who have experienced a crisis. They require a professional referral:

[Buttle UK](#)

Turn2Us is a source of practical support and information for people struggling with their finances, including searching for grants and a benefits calculator.

[Turn2Us](#)

Step Change offer free debt management advice.

[Step Change](#)

14. Legal support

Kinship arrangements have legal implications. Sometimes parental responsibility is held by the kinship carer, sometimes solely by the parents, and sometimes by the local authority. It is important to understand the legal implications of your kinship arrangement.

Kinship has a guide to legal help for kinship carers including organisations that can help with finding a solicitor or providing legal advice.

[Legal help for kinship carers - Kinship](#)

Family Rights Group has also produced their top tips to working with a solicitor.

[Working with a Solicitor](#)

Rotherham's Kinship Care Policy commits that for prospective Special Guardians where the child is subject to care proceedings, or was looked after and Rotherham Council have completed a Special Guardianship assessment recommending them as Special Guardians,

As part of Rotherham's Kinship Care Policy, Rotherham Council will fund up to three hours legal advice at legal aid agency hourly rates for prospective Special Guardians where:

- The child is subject to care proceedings,
- The child was a Child in Care and Rotherham Council have completed a Special Guardianship assessment which recommends them as Special Guardians

This is available only where the prospective Special Guardian is not in receipt of legal aid funded legal representation already.

[Testamentary Guardianship](#)

Some kinship carers will be able to appoint a Testamentary Guardian, or person named in a will to care for their kinship child upon their death.

Kinship has a guide to testamentary guardianship and who can make these arrangements.

[Testamentary guardianship - Kinship](#)

Rotherham's Kinship Care Policy commits that for Special Guardians, where the child was subject to care proceedings or was looked after prior to the making of the SGO, Rotherham Council will fund up to £175 contribution for the making of a Testamentary Guardianship arrangement for the children.

15. [Online safety](#)

Children and young people can be at risk of cyber bullying, grooming and exploitation online. It is important for everyone to take steps to ensure every child and young person is safe online.

The links to websites below provide further advice and tips for children and their families on how to keep safe when online:

- [Online safety – a guide for parents and carers – Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership \(rscp.org.uk\)](https://www.rscp.org.uk)
- [Internet Matters](#)
- [Safer Internet](#)
- [NSPCC | The UK children's charity | NSPCC](#)
- [Promoting online safety for children \(childrenssociety.org.uk\)](https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk)

16. Health, mental health and trauma

Health

Rotherham's SEND Local Offer has a list of health services and their contact details.

[A-Z of Health Services – Rotherham SEND Local Offer](#)

Mental health

If a child or young person needs some support with their emotional wellbeing or mental health, there are a number of different ways to access this.

You can find useful advice and resources about emotional wellbeing and mental health by clicking on the links below.

- [YoungMinds: Mental Health Charity For Children And Young People](#)
- [Resources \(withmeinmind.co.uk\)](https://www.withmeinmind.co.uk)
- [Advice \(rotherhive.co.uk\)](https://www.rotherhive.co.uk)

KOOTH online support service

Rotherham has commissioned KOOTH to deliver this. KOOTH is aimed at all young people aged 11 to 25 and provides online information and support, including the option of 1:1 online chat with a trained counsellor. No referral is needed.

[KOOTH \(kooth.com\)](https://www.kooth.com)

Schools and settings

Staff in schools and educational settings see children and young people on a daily basis and are able to offer some support.

For more information about the graduated response to social, emotional and mental health in schools, click below:

[Understanding SEMH needs \(SENDCootherham.co.uk\)](https://sendc.therham.co.uk)

This will take you to the online resource that schools can use to support any children or young people with needs in this area.

Some schools in Rotherham are also involved with the 'With me in mind' project which means that they have access to a team of support workers based in schools.

For more information, click below:

- [With me in Mind: CAMHS \(RDASH.nhs.uk\)](https://rdash.nhs.uk)
- [With me in Mind \(withmeinmind.co.uk\)](https://withmeinmind.co.uk)

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

CAMHS provide a range of different services for children and young people aged 5 to 18 years old. Young people themselves (or any practitioner working with them) are able to access some initial advice through the 'getting advice' pathway. Staff on the 'getting advice' pathway will identify whether children and young people would benefit from seeing one of the other teams in CAMHS and will pass them on as needed.

For more information on CAMHS services, click below:

[CAMHS – Rotherham \(RDASH.nhs.uk\)](https://rdash.nhs.uk)

Please click below to see a flowchart describing CAMHS services: [CAMHS Referral Pathways](#)

Trauma:

Support with Trauma can be accessed through RMBC's Empower service.

Some kinship children experienced traumatic events before they moved to live with their kinship carers.

Kinship has a guide to understanding trauma and how this might affect children's emotions, behaviour and relationships with others.

[Supporting children and young people with trauma - Kinship](#)

The 0-19 Public Health Nursing Service

This service includes health visitors, school nurses and early years practitioners. They are able to offer advice and support on a range of issues linked to health and wellbeing.

The school nurses offer drop-in sessions at mainstream secondary schools in Rotherham where young people can discuss any health issues (mental or physical) which are bothering them.

Children in Care have a specific team.

For more information about the 0-19 service and how to make contact, click below:

[Rotherham's Children's Public Health Nursing Service \(0-19\) – \(therotherhamft.nhs.uk\)](https://therotherhamft.nhs.uk)

Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund

Kinship children and their carers may be eligible for therapy funded through the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund, if their kinship child was Looked After before and is now the subject of a Child Arrangements Order or Special Guardianship Order. An assessment is completed by our Empower Service to inform any application.

The criteria for the fund is outlined on the Department for Education's website:

[Adoption and special guardianship support fund \(ASGSF\) - GOV.UK](https://gov.uk)

Family Rights Group have also covered the frequently asked questions about the fund:

[Kinship care - Family Rights Group](#)

Other charitable sources of funding for therapy

Tony Hudgell Foundation is a charity that offers grants to fund therapy where children have experienced abuse or neglect.

[APPLY FOR A GRANT — Tony Hudgell Foundation](#)

17. Neurodiversity

Support is available for children and young people with autism (ASD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), as well as for their carers. Although it is possible to get support without a diagnosis, you may want your child or young person to be assessed for Autism, ADHD or both. The child or young person themselves may feel that this would be helpful.

The Rotherham SEND Local Offer has the most up to date and comprehensive advice and guidance.

[Health and Wellbeing – Rotherham SEND Local Offer.](#)

RDaSH also have advice and guidance.

[Neurodevelopment in children and adolescents – Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust \(RDaSH\)](#)

In Rotherham, the following services offer diagnostic assessments:

Children under 5 years of age

The Child Development Centre (CDC) in Rotherham offers a service for pre-schoolers in Rotherham. They are able to carry out a full multi-disciplinary neurodevelopmental assessment for autism. Health professionals, nurseries, schools and portage workers can all refer children into the CDC.

For more information about the CDC click below

[Child Development Centre](#)

Children and young people between 5 years and 17 years

Rotherham's child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) assess for Autism and ADHD as part of their neurodevelopmental pathway.

Referrals are received through the child or young person's school or educational setting (unless the child/young person is electively home educated). Referrals include detailed information from families.

The child or young person's educational setting must provide evidence of at least two terms of intervention to support the child or young person. The information submitted is considered by a multi-agency panel and, if it is felt that there is sufficient evidence of a neurodevelopmental difference, the referral will be accepted.

Regardless of the outcome of this screening, the panel will always aim to make recommendations to support the young person and their family.

For more information, click below:

[CAMHS ASD and ADHD](#)

Young people – 18 years and over

Diagnostic assessments for adults are offered by Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust (RDaSH).

For more information, click below:

[RDaSH Adult ASD](#)

Rotherham residents are also able to access neurodevelopmental assessments under the Right to Choose:

[Neurodevelopmental assessment](#)

If you want to request an assessment for a young person with a moderate to severe learning disability, please contact the Intellectual Disabilities Team in CAMHS.

[CAMHS ID Team](#)

18. Family time

We know that making family time a success, and knowing how to help children with understanding that they do not live with a parent if this was a decision made in the Courts, can be a challenge. Our practitioners can offer advice and guidance.

They can be contacted on 01709 82268 inside working hours, or through the online form on the website.

[Post Special Guardianship Order Service – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

We know that kinship families and birth parents sometimes need help to establish a pattern for children to spend time and that help with mediating is important. Our Family Group Conferencing service are experts in helping families do this, and they include restorative conferencing trained practitioners.

[Family Group Conferencing – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

Although rare, there may be occasions where it is only possible for a parent to spend time with their child who is in a kinship arrangement through professional supervision. This might be due to safety or because there is no one who can support or supervise who is more familiar to the child.

There is usually a cost associated with this service and it happens at a contact centre. The National Association of Child Contact Centres offer accredited contact centres.

[Find a Child Contact Centre - NACCC](#)

The Family Mediation Council also offer advice and information on local mediators.

[Family Mediation Council](#)

19. Preparing for Adulthood

Young people who have lived in a kinship arrangement through a Special Guardianship Order and were a Child in Care before this may be a qualifying care leaver.

Rotherham has a Leaving Care Local Offer which explains the full details of support available.

Qualifying young people are:

- Aged at least 16 but under 21 and were a looked after young person prior to the making of a Special Guardianship Order, or if at any time after reaching the age of 16, were looked after for a period of less than 13 weeks and have not returned home, or;
- At age 16/17 were an eligible child but were living with a parent for more than six months before reaching the age of 18 (unless you were there under a care order)

The support available to qualifying young people is outlined here:

[Homepage – Rotherham Leaving Care Local Offer](#)

You can contact the Leaving Care Service below:

Call: 01709 822673

Email: leavingcare@rotherham.gov.uk

Rotherham's SEND Local Offer also has lots of useful information and links for young people with SEND who are approaching adulthood.

[Preparing for Adulthood – Rotherham SEND Local Offer.](#)

Access to Records

Sometimes kinship children reaching adulthood might want to make sense of their journey, what happened, why decisions were made, and who helped make them.

A request can be made to view the files we hold using this link: [Subject Access Requests.](#)

Sometimes, it can take a long time for the files to arrive, and they might be bundled in a few envelopes depending on how much there is.

There can be a lot of information that might be difficult to understand. It may contain information that has been redacted because they relate to another person. Data protection prevents us from sharing that information.

We will provide a copy of all the information stored, and we will help the young person to understand what happened in their life, and why.

20. Parents of kinship children

Family Rights Group offer an advice line open to parents who are involved with social workers or whose children are in kinship arrangements.

[Get Help and Advice - Family Rights Group](#)

Family Rights Group also publish top tips for working with a social worker.

[Working with a Social Worker](#)

21. Independent advice

Kinship

Kinship is a charity supporting kinship carers. They offer a help line, local support groups, training and information and advice online:

- [Kinship: Home | The Kinship care charity | England and Wales](#)

- [Contact the Kinship advice team | Support for kinship carers](#)

Family Rights Group

Family Rights Group is a charity that supports families, including kinship families, involved in child protection systems. The charity offers an advice line, webchat and online forums for kinship carers.

- [Get Help and Advice - Family Rights Group](#)

Rotherham SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service).

They can offer you impartial information, advice and support if you are:

- a parent or carer for a child or young person up to age 25 with special educational needs or disabilities
- a child up to age 16 who has special educational needs or disabilities
- a young person aged 16-25 who has special educational needs or disabilities

They aim to empower you to play an active and informed part in your child's education.

They will work with you to address any issues you are experiencing. In most cases our help is only needed for a few weeks, but you can talk to us as many times as you want. Our support can help you feel more able to tackle issues yourself. You may need less active support because of our involvement.

They will help you work with schools and practitioners to improve your child's achievement.

The services they offer are:

- trained staff and volunteers offering confidential and impartial information, advice and support
- information about education, health and social care, voluntary organisations and support groups
- a range of information leaflets on special educational needs and disability related topics
- access to special educational needs and disability information such as books, CDs and video
- training for parents and practitioners

Find out more on their website here: [Homepage – Rotherham SENDIASS](#)

Rotherham Parent Carer Forum

A registered charity run by and for families of children and young people (aged 0-25) who have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

- [RPCF Rotherham Parent Carers Forum](#)

Healthwatch

A local organisation that acts as an independent champion for people who use health and social care services.

- [Healthwatch Rotherham](#)

22. Providing feedback

Your views and feedback on services are important. Individual teams will always appreciate feedback, but if you want to provide feedback on a specific service, this is how to do so:

- [RDaSH](#) – Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust. With responsibility for CAMHS.
- [Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust](#) – The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust. With responsibility for 0-19 services.
- [South Yorkshire I.C.B.](#) – The South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board. With responsibility for commissioning health services and for GP practices.

Complaints within the local authority:

- [Complain about Council services | Instructions – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)
- [Complaint about Children and Young People's Services](#)
- [Complain about a school – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

Kinship Local Offer: Improving Lives Select Commission June 2025

**Chris MacDonald,
Kinship Lead CYPS**

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National context

DfE definition of kinship care:

‘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’.

DfE’s Oct 2024 ‘Kinship Care: Statutory Guidance’ requires that we:

- Nominate senior officer as lead for kinship.
- Publish and regularly review our Kinship Local Offer.
- Offer family group decision making to all families before care proceedings.
- Virtual School to nominate officer for educational outcomes for children in kinship care arrangements.

Local context – Our progress

- Updated RMBC Kinship Care Policy published in 2024.
- Nominated officer for kinship identified.
- Role of Virtual School Head providing advice and guidance regarding children in kinship care and children with a social worker is already established.
- Uplift to kinship allowances following change to means testing model effective from Jan 2025.

Decisions and scrutiny

An update on the Kinship Local Offer was presented to ILSC in March 2025.

The draft Kinship Local Offer is presented to ILSC for scrutiny ahead of a Cabinet decision on 07.07.25.

Kinship Local Offer

The Kinship Local Offer is expected to address:

- Support groups and training.
- Financial support.
- Help to stay in work.
- Accommodation.
- Education.
- Supporting family time.
- Family group decision making.
- Legal support.
- Therapeutic support.

Kinship Local Offer

The Council's Kinship Local Offer:

- Support groups run fortnightly.
- Training including dedicated for kinship families.
- Family Help Navigators specialised in kinship.
- Educational advice and support including Virtual School.
- Connections to Family Hubs.
- Support with complexity and instability via Empower, our placement stability service, including accessing the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund.
- Financial allowances for eligible families.
- Help with legal advice for eligible families

Thank you

Chris MacDonald
Service Manager – Locality
Kinship Lead

BRIEFING	TO:	Improving Lives Select Commission
	DATE:	17 th June, 2025
	TITLE:	Health, Safety and Welfare Panel Representation
1. Role of the Health, Safety & Welfare Panel		
	<p>The Health, Welfare and Safety Panel provides a regular forum for the Council and its employees to consider matters relating to health, welfare and safety and to provide advice, guidance and recommendations to appropriate Committees or other Council bodies.</p> <p>Objectives of the Panel include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To promote a healthy and safe working environment for all members of staff employed by the Council and to protect the public from any risk of danger that may arise as a result of the Council's activities.• To monitor the welfare arrangements (facilities for eating, drinking, first aid and toilets, etc) provided for employees.• To provide a forum for consultation on proposals put forward by management and by the trades unions.• To recommend changes to the way in which work is performed by the introduction of safe systems of work, procedures and arrangements, including those for the training of staff.• To monitor statistics on accidents, incidents and illness and to recommend action to address key issues which may arise from that information.• To promote greater awareness of health, welfare and safety policies to assist in facilitating improvement in Council performance.	
2. Membership and Request for Member Representation from the Member & Democratic Panel		
	<p>The Panel comprises six Elected Members of the Council to be appointed annually, including Member(s) from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cabinet Member with responsibility for Health, Welfare and Safety.• A member from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.• One member from each of the Select Commissions (Scrutiny).• A member from the Members' Training and Development Panel.	
3. Membership and Request for Member Representation from the Member & Democratic Panel		
	<p>The Panel also has representation from the Employees' Side and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least three teacher representatives (NASUWT and NEU Trades Unions).	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A maximum of seven representatives from all other areas of Council work e.g. UNISON, UNITE the Union, GMB.
4. Frequency of Meetings / Visits	
	<p>The Panel shall normally meet four times per year. Additional meetings may be held if the business to be transacted is sufficiently urgent. The meetings scheduled for 2025/26 are:-</p> <p>10th July, 2025 at 2.00 p.m. 9th October, 2025 at 2.00 p.m. 5th February, 2026 at 2.00 p.m. 23rd April, 2026 at 2.00 p.m.</p> <p>Inspection visits by the Panel shall be made on a quarterly basis to various locations throughout the borough. Visits of inspection are scheduled to take place on:-</p> <p>3rd September, 2025 at 8.45 a.m. (from the Town Hall) Other dates to be confirmed</p> <p>Refreshments are available from 8.30 a.m. prior to departure.</p>