

News and information for Kinship Families in Essex



Dear Kinship Carer,

We hope you enjoyed the summer holidays and made the most of the good weather.

The It's My Life Festival this year was a great success and the feedback we had was amazing. The attendance this year was double from last year. Thank you to all of you who joined in the fun and activities. We hope you all enjoyed the activities and making new friends.

As summer gently fades and the school gates prepare to open once more, September arrives with its winds of change. Whether it's a first step into school, a leap from infants to juniors, or a bold stride into college or university—transitions can stir both excitement and uncertainty.

We know these moments can be challenging, not just for children but for you too. Please remember, you're not alone we are here to walk beside you, offering support every step of the way. And amidst the busyness, don't forget to care for yourselves. Your wellbeing matters just as much.

Best wishes

Kinship Post Order Support Team

Kinship Conference Monday 6th October 2025

We would like to invite you all to this year's conference being held at The Keene Hall, Galleywood. Please see attached flyer for further details.



If you would like to attend, please email Clair at clair.prior@essex.gov.uk

Youth Group

We have had a successful start to our brand-new Youth Group for kinship young people age, 13 – 18.

The aim of the group is to provide a safe and fun environment, make new friends, learn skills and to explore interests.

The next group is on Saturday 20th September in Braintree. For further information, please contact either Oscar on Oscar.Boaler-Hysett@essex.gov.uk or Colleen on colleen.double@essex.gov.uk All the details are on the attached flyer.

Upcoming Coffee Mornings

You are guaranteed a warm welcome and a cup of tea or coffee, interesting conversations and a chance to meet new friends.



Please be reminded that it is not appropriate for children to attend our coffee mornings, due to the adult content of some of the discussions.

Area	Venue	Date and Time
Basildon	Mother's Kitchen Café 6 Felmores End, Pitsea, Basildon SS13 1PN	Thursday 18 th September and 23 rd October 2025 9.30am to 11.30am
Clacton	Weeley Village Hall, Clacton Rd, Weeley, Weeley Heath, Clacton-on-Sea, CO16 9DH	Friday 5 th September and 3 rd October 2025 10am to noon
Canvey Island	Leigh Beck Infant School, Point Road, Canvey Island, SS8 7TD	Thursday 11 th September and 16 th October 2025 9.30am to 11.30am
Cressing	St. Barnabas Church Hall, Claud Ince Avenue, Cressing, CM77 8HG	Friday 19 th September and 17 th October 2025 10am to noon

Harlow	Woodlands Family Centre, 9 Peterswood, Harlow, CM18 7RJ	Wednesday 3 rd September and 1 st October 2025 10am to noon
Virtual	Via Teams – link sent out the day before	Tuesday 9 th September and 7 th October 2025 10am to noon

Research - Exploring Special Guardian's relationships with their birth child

We have an opportunity for special guardians who are also grandmothers to take part in some research.

Further details are attached. **Participants will be offered a £10 voucher as a token of appreciation for their participation**



If you would like to take part in this, please email Imrana Choudhry on ic356@canterbury.ac.uk

Wider Local Offer of Support

Essex Libraries

Essex Libraries have a wide range of free useful resources both online and in person across all their venues. Please take a look.

<https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/events>

<https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/digital-content/our-online-library>

Virtual School

The Essex Virtual School is dedicated to supporting children in care (CIC), previously looked-after children (PLAC), and those under Special Guardianship Orders, helping them to thrive as learners. They aim to enhance educational outcomes by providing guidance and support that raises aspirations and expectations for these children and young people. They work with designated teachers, social workers, carers and other partners at times of difficulty and need.

Their aim is to:

- improve understanding of the unique barriers to learning and education experienced by many of our children and young people
 - promote and foster a culture that takes account of children and young people's views according to age and understanding, identifying, and meeting their educational needs
 - work in partnership with all of those who support our children and young people to raise aspirations and expectations and build capacity to make a positive difference to their educational experiences and outcomes
 - provide support and challenge where needed to ensure that the educational needs of our children are prioritised
- For support and advice contact them on virtual.school@essex.gov.uk

<https://schools.essex.gov.uk/pupil-support-and-wellbeing/essex-virtual-school>

For further guidance please contact virtualschool@essex.gov.uk



Kinship Compass

Compass is an independent online information, advice, and support hub just for kinship carers nationally run by Kinship. They hold a number of free workshops. You can sign up for these using this link [workshops and roadshows](https://kinship.org.uk/support-and-advice/training-and-events/) or by searching <https://kinship.org.uk/support-and-advice/training-and-events/>

As always, they also have their peer support and Someone Like Me services running, as well as our online and phone line advice support. <https://compass.kinship.org.uk/> or call them 0300 123 7015.

Essex Kinship Post Order Support Team - Contact Details:



The team has a dedicated duty number - 033301 39860, open Monday to Thursday from 9.00am to 5.30pm and Friday 9am to 4.30pm. Our aim is to answer your queries, offer support and advice or signpost you to a partner agency where necessary for additional support and advice.

You can also e-mail us at any time on kinship.support.gov.uk – this mailbox is monitored daily Monday to Friday.

You can also access our website <https://www.essex.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/special-guardianship>

Please be mindful that urgent requests or concerns regarding the welfare of a child should always be called through to:

Children & Families Hub: 0345 603 7627

After hours - Emergency Duty Team: 0345 606 1212

Mon - Thurs 5.00pm - 8.45am and Fri 4.30pm - Mon 8.45am inc. Bank holidays

If you no longer wish to receive our newsletter, please let us know by emailing kinship.support@essex.gov.uk and we will remove you from our mailing list.

