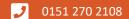
Contact us to find out more - we are here to help:

For further information please visit www.kinshipcarersliverpool.co.uk where you will find a range of further guidance, information leaflets and resources related to:

- Local Legal Advice Services including free Law Clinics & specialist legal advisers in Liverpool.
- Our Activities Programme for Kinship Carers, Kids & Families
- Information & Links about Legal Orders related to Kinship Care
- Money & Benefits Advice & Links
- Early Help & Wellbeing Information
- Schools and Learning Resources & Links
- Signposting to national Kinship Websites & Guidance

Contact Details

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Special Guardianship Orders-A Guide for Kinship Carers

We advise you to take specialist legal advice at the earliest possible stage about your options & implications related to becoming a kinship carer. Not doing so may have far-reaching implications in terms of the financial & support services you can access at a later stage.

Q. What is a Special Guardianship Order (SGO)

A. Special Guardianship is a formal court order which allows parental control over a child by individuals other than the parent. This could be a grandparent, close relative or even a family friend. Special Guardianship is a court order which:

- Secures a child's home with someone who is not their parent, on a long-term basis, and;
- With a few exceptions to the rule, a special guardian can make all the major decisions about the child's upbringing, and the Special Guardian does not have to consult with the parents about these decisions.

You can apply for a SGO if you have a Child Arrangements Order/Residence Order for the child; the child has lived with you for at least three of the last five years; you have the consent of the local authority if the child is in care; you are a relative of the child and the child has resided with you for at least one year immediately pre-dating an application for a Special Guardianship Order.

Q. How are arrangements made for Special Guardianship?

A. You apply to the court for the order. You can apply through a solicitor or apply yourself as a 'litigant in person'. It's worth checking whether legal aid is available in your case. You will have to tell your local authority's Children's Services Department that you intend to apply for an SGO and go through an assessment process to be sure that an SGO is in the child's best interests. This process (a Viability Assessment is similar to a foster carer assessment.

Special Guardianship Orders (SGO)

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