

Undertaking a Kinship Care Assessment

FORM K (WALES)
SUPPLEMENTARY
INFORMATION

2026



Cymdeithas ar gyfer Maethu,
Gofal Perthynas a Mabwysiadu
Association for Fostering,
Kinship and Adoption



How to use this pamphlet

The book *Undertaking a Kinship Care Assessment* can be used in both England and Wales to support the completion of Form K (Kinship Care Assessment). This pamphlet provides legal references that are specific to Wales and specific guidance to support planning in Wales, and can be easily read alongside the book. It clearly identifies which chapters and subsections of the book contain references and guidance specific to Wales.

Chapter 1: How to use this guide

Page 2: Content and purpose of this guide

Form K – Support Plan or the All Wales Special Guardianship Support Services Plan must be completed as part of every assessment. It should be informed by the information gathered and discussions that take place as part of the assessment process. It is crucial that the current and possible future support needs of both the prospective carer and child are thoroughly considered throughout.

Page 4: Kinship Care Assessment – Support Plan

The support plan sets out all of the child’s and prospective kinship carer’s needs as considered throughout Part 2.

In Wales, the Welsh Government endorsed the All Wales Special Guardianship Support Services Plan and this should be used when the local authority care plan for the child recommends a special guardianship order.

The Form K (Wales) – Support Plan should therefore be used in the following scenarios:

- as an interim support plan when the child’s care plan is not yet agreed;
- as a kinship fostering support plan if the child’s care plan is recommending a care order;
- as a kinship support plan if the child’s care plan is recommending a child arrangements order.

Page 4: Identifying support needs

As you collate and analyse information, Form K asks you to consider support needs under each section. To avoid repetition in this guide, we have not included prompts about considering support needs but it is imperative that each support section is completed. This will inform Form K – Support Plan or the All Wales Special Guardianship Support Services Plan, and should make its completion more straightforward. Refer to Form K’s Guidance Notes for more suggestions about the support sections. See Chapter 10 for further information about support planning more broadly.

Chapter 2: The context of assessment

Page 11: Timescales

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (Wales) Regulations 2015 enable temporary approval of a kinship foster carer for up to 16 weeks, with an extension of eight weeks if the assessment is not yet complete. The Regulations require a local authority to make 'immediate arrangements' to begin a 'full' fostering assessment.

Chapter 3: Care planning

Page 17: Child-led care planning

The requirement for completion of a support plan within Form K highlights the fact that support should be available to kinship carers, regardless of the child's legal status, and must articulate how the child's needs can be met with support. If the kinship care assessment has a negative recommendation, it must be clear that the arrangement would not meet the child's needs even with support.

If a kinship care assessment is being undertaken during care proceedings, there may be pressures on timescales, as discussed in Chapter 2. Watts (2022) notes that 'there can be limited time to think through the impact of care planning decisions and how the child's permanence will be supported'. Form K, Form K – Support Plan and the All Wales Special Guardianship Support Services Plan direct the assessing worker to think about the child's needs, not only in the here and now, but likely future needs for both child and carer. Kinship carers often talk about not knowing who to contact when needs change, yet we can make reasonable predictions, based on the child's experiences of harm and trauma, about their likely future needs and the carer's capacity to meet these. This must inform care planning and the recommendation of the kinship care assessment.

Page 17: Making a recommendation

Recommend that a special guardianship order be granted if the permanence plan is for the child to live with the carer. This order gives the carer parental responsibility and the 'special guardian may exercise parental responsibility to the exclusion of all others with parental responsibility, apart from another named special guardian' (Special Guardianship Code of Practice, 2018).

Chapter 6: Ability to meet a child's assessed needs

Page 38: Educational needs

Do you understand their Individual Development Plan (IDP), if relevant?

Chapter 8: Practical considerations

Page 49: **How will the carer's housing be affected by caring for the child?**

Special guardianship and fostering regulations require a description of the carer's accommodation.

Due to the often unexpected nature of kinship care, carers may experience overcrowding and challenges in being able to move to larger accommodation. This section requires you to think about their housing situation, balance this alongside the child's needs, wishes and feelings, and consider what support may be required for the housing situation to change.

Page 49/50: The 2024 *Kinship Care: Statutory guidance for local authorities* states that:

Fostering panels should try to avoid making negative recommendations solely based on the kinship foster carers not having adequate space to a suitable standard during the assessment. The wishes and feelings of the child will be an important factor.

Whilst this statutory guidance is only applicable in England, it nonetheless highlights the importance of taking a balanced approach in kinship care, weighing any potential for overcrowding against other factors, such as the child's wishes and the meaning of their pre-existing relationship.

If a child joining the family will be sharing a bedroom, it is good practice to set out some of the strengths and risks of the bedroom sharing arrangement for the individual children. Some local authorities will have a bedroom sharing risk assessment template to complete.

Chapter 9: Checks and references

Page 54: **Disclosure and barring service check**

Fostering Panels (Establishment and Functions) (Wales) Regulations 2018 Reg 7(9) lists specific offences that prevent individuals from being approved as mainstream foster carers; broadly, any offences against a child and sexual offences against an adult. However, prospective kinship carers, if they, or a member of their household, are a relative of the child according to the legal definition, may still be approved as a kinship foster carer as their approval is for a particular child only (Reg 7(11)). There must be risk assessment of any offence, including those offences that would prevent approval as a mainstream foster carer, with any risks to the child explicitly set out, and the reasons why any such risks are either manageable or mitigated against.

Page 55: **Local authority check**

The local authority check must include any previous assessment to be a foster carer, adopter or kinship carer and previous family court proceedings.

Both the Fostering Panels (Establishment and Functions) (Wales) Regulations 2018 and Schedule to the Special Guardianship (Wales) Regulations 2005, as amended by the Special Guardianship (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018, require a check to be completed with the local authority where a prospective carer lives. It is also best practice to complete checks with local authorities where the carer has lived previously; your local policy should specify which of these to undertake.

Page 55: Health

Both the Fostering Panels (Establishment and Functions) (Wales) Regulations 2018 and Schedule to the Special Guardianship (Wales) Regulations 2005, as amended by the Special Guardianship (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018, require a health check.

Page 56: Home and neighbourhood

Both the Fostering Panels (Establishment and Functions) (Wales) Regulations 2018 and Schedule to the Special Guardianship (Wales) Regulations 2005, as amended by the Special Guardianship (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018, require a check and description of the carer's accommodation. This could include general information about numbers of bedrooms, living and outdoor space and the home conditions. Be aware of the impact of poverty on home conditions, as this may indicate the need for financial support.

Page 56: Personal references

Both the Fostering Panels (Establishment and Functions) (Wales) Regulations 2018 and Schedule to the Special Guardianship (Wales) Regulations 2005, as amended by the Special Guardianship (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018, require completion of personal references. Under special guardianship regulations, you must interview three personal referees, no more than one of whom is a relative of the special guardian.

Chapter 10: Support planning

In this chapter, where it refers to 'the' support plan, please read as 'any' support plan as this will include Form K (Wales) – Support Plan or the All Wales Special Guardianship Support Services Plan.

Page 60: Form K requires consideration and analysis of what support might be needed, and it includes either the Form K – Support Plan or the All Wales Special Guardianship Support Services Plan. This is an essential component of Form K and must be completed as part of the assessment, as the assessment is incomplete without it.

The Form K (Wales) – Support Plan should therefore be used in the following scenarios:

- as an interim support plan when the child's care plan is not yet agreed;
- as a kinship fostering support plan if the child's care plan is recommending a care order;
- as a kinship support plan if the child's care plan is recommending a child arrangements order.

If you are using the Form K (Wales) – Support Plan as an interim plan, it can be briefer as this reflects the interim nature of the caring arrangement. But a support plan is still needed. The support needs will be assessed and analysed throughout the Form K assessment and therefore should also inform the final updated support plan, whether that be an updated final Form K (Wales) – Support Plan or the All Wales Special Guardianship Support Services Plan.

Page 62: Review processes and how to access future support

Special guardianship regulations require support plans to be reviewed at an appropriate time or when specified in the plan, following a change in circumstances, or at least annually. In the All Wales Special Guardianship Support Services Plan, you must make clear the frequency of review, and who is responsible for this. If Form K (Wales) – Support Plan is being written as a fostering support plan, it would be good practice to review it as part of the foster carer annual review.

It is important that kinship families know how to access support in the future, if the local authority has ended their involvement, so any support plan must include contact details and self-referral processes. If the family lives in a different local authority, you must be clear about how they can contact their residing local authority to ask for support, with specific email and/or telephone contact information.

Chapter 11 Placing children with family living overseas

Page 63: Refer to Form K (Kinship Care Assessment) Wales (2026), Appendix 2: Overseas questions and guidance, which has been amended with Wales-specific guidance and legal references. Chapter 11 is a reproduction of the England version of Appendix 2, and therefore the Wales version of Appendix 2 should be read instead.

Written by CoramBAAF
and AFKA Cymru

© CoramBAAF 2026