

## News and information for Kinship Families in Essex



Dear Kinship Carer,

This month's newsletter is a bumper issue with details of range of events, learning opportunities and support services.

Remember we are always here if you require guidance, advice, or support.

Best wishes

Kinship Post Order Support Team

### **Upcoming Events**

#### **Guided Meditation Session**



We would like to invite you to a guided meditation session on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March at 10am during our virtual coffee morning.

The session will be led by a qualified practitioner, Sarah. Sarah is also a kinship carer, who understands the challenges and complexities that kinship carers can face daily. There is no need to book.

#### **Safeguarding Kinship Carers to Safeguard their Children (via Teams)**

How to keep yourselves and your children safe: know the signs, what to look for and how to access support.

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025 10am to 12.30pm

Group to meet via Teams and Facilitated by Colleen Double – Kinship Post Order Support Team. If you are interested in attending, please contact

Colleen via email on [colleen.double@essex.gov.uk](mailto:colleen.double@essex.gov.uk) or call the duty number on 033301 39860

## Upcoming Coffee Mornings



However you take it, you are guaranteed a warm welcome and a cup of what you fancy, 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 20 <sup>th</sup> March and 24 <sup>th</sup> April 2025 and 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2025 <i>9.30am to 11.30am</i>
Clacton	Weeley Village Hall, Clacton Rd, Weeley, Weeley Heath, Clacton-on-Sea, CO16 9DH	Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> March and 4 <sup>th</sup> April and 9 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 <i>10am to noon</i>
Canvey Island	Leigh Beck Infant School, Point Road, Canvey Island, SS8 7TD	Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> March and 24 <sup>th</sup> April and 15 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 <i>9.30am to 11.30am</i>
Cressing	St. Barnabas Church Hall, Claud Ince Avenue, Cressing, CM77 8HG	Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> March and 25 <sup>th</sup> April and 16 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 <i>10am to noon</i>
Harlow	Woodlands Family Centre, 9 Peterswood, Harlow, CM18 7RJ	Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> March and 2 <sup>nd</sup> April and 7 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 <i>10am to noon</i>

Virtual	Via Teams – link sent out the day before	Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> March and 1 <sup>st</sup> April and 6 <sup>th</sup> May 2025  10am to noon
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## Charities, Support Services and Training Opportunities

### Autism Central for Parents and Carers

<https://www.autismcentral.org.uk/hubs/east-england-delivered-essex-county-council>

The East of England Autism Central Hubs offer guidance to families, carers, and personal assistants of autistic people of any age. They do not need a diagnosis to access the service. Support is provided by parents and carers of autistic people who are happy to share their knowledge and experience with others. What they can offer:

- A constantly growing range of information and resources.
- Weekly online groups – drop ins and themed sessions covering a range of topics.
- 1:1 support via a telephone or Teams call.

### Essex Family Forum

We are the parent carer forum in Essex for families whose children and young people, up to the age of 25, have special educational needs or disabilities.



<https://essexfamilyforum.org/>

### What does Essex Family Forum as a Parent Carer Forum do?

We work with (not for) local authorities, health commissioning bodies and social care to represent parent views and experiences to influence and inform the provision and services used by our children, young people, and their families.

Essex Family Forum believes in co-production. Co-production is when parent carers play an integral and equal part in the decision-making process and are fully engaged in shaping, developing, implementing, and evaluating services and systems.

## **ACL (Adult Community Learning) Community and Family Wellbeing Hub**

Offer FREE interactive courses to help you negotiate these tricky times. If you are a parent, grandparent or caring for a child or young person living in Essex they have support for you.

Courses are delivered online live & face to face at various locations across Essex and some flexible learning classes. You will come to non-judgemental, supportive learning sessions facilitated to support your family's journey.

<https://aclessex.com/courses/community-family-learning/>

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:virtualschool@essex.gov.uk) or [www.essex.gov.uk/virtualschool](http://www.essex.gov.uk/virtualschool)



## Training Opportunities through Kinship Compass

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

- EHCP/SEND Processes
- Preparing for Sensitive Conversations
- Understanding trauma and attachment

From January 2025 Kinship are extending their training with new workshops which are now available to book.

- Foetal Alcohol Syndrome - understanding FAS
- Raising a biracial child - understanding the importance of identity, impact of racism
- Life story work - practical tools and resources to support kinship children to understand their family history.
- Understanding aggressive and challenging behaviours

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:



We have a dedicated duty number on 033301 39860. The phone Helpline is open Monday to Thursday from 9.00am to 5.30pm and Friday 9am to 4.30pm. You can also e-mail us at any time on [kinship.support.gov.uk](mailto:kinship.support.gov.uk) - this mailbox is monitored daily Monday to Friday. Our dedicated support team will aim to answer your queries or signpost you to a partner agency that can offer you further support and advice.

We also have 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](mailto:kinship.support@essex.gov.uk) and we will remove you from our mailing list.

Last but not least we would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for the wonderful caring task you do every day!!

