

## News and information for Kinship Families in Essex



Dear Kinship Carer,

Spring is showing signs of arriving with spring flowers starting to bloom and the evenings staying lighter. We hope you are looking forward to the spring school holidays.

As always, we would like to keep you up to date with news and developments within the Kinship Post Order Support Team.

In this month's edition we are pleased to share details of our new group and an opportunity to take part in research.

Please do contact us at any time, if you need guidance, advice, and support or to just share achievements of the children/young people with us.

Best wishes

Kinship Post Order Support Team

## Youth Group



We have a brand-new Youth Group for kinship young people age, 13 – 18.

The aim of the group is:

- To provide a safe and fun environment
- Young people to make new friends
- Learn skills
- Explore interests

We are planning to kick off with an event on a Saturday in May '25 in the Braintree area. Please look out for your next invitation.

Please see attached flyer for more details.

## 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.



If you would like to take part in this, please email Imrana Choudhry on [ic356@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:ic356@canterbury.ac.uk)

## 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 24 <sup>th</sup> April 2025 and 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2025 9.30am to 11.30am
Clacton	Weeley Village Hall, Clacton Rd, Weeley, Weeley Heath, Clacton-on-Sea, CO16 9DH	Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> April and 9 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 10am to noon
Canvey Island	Leigh Beck Infant School, Point Road, Canvey Island, SS8 7TD	Thursday 24 <sup>th</sup> April and 15 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 9.30am to 11.30am

Cressing	St. Barnabas Church Hall, Claud Ince Avenue, Cressing, CM77 8HG	Friday 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 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 1 <sup>st</sup> April and 6 <sup>th</sup> May 2025  10am to noon

## Charities, Support Services and Training Opportunities

### 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 team's aim is to answer your queries or signpost you to a partner agency that can offer you further support and advice.

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.

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.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for the wonderful caring task you do every day!!

