



Centre for excellence
for Children's Care and Protection

Implications for Practice and Policy

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The proportion of ‘looked after’ children who are living in kinship care has increased substantially over the study period, from around 1 in 6 (16%) in 2008 to 1 in 3 (29%) in 2019

- Need systems and processes that support the unique value of kinship care
- Should allow for tailored consideration of individual children’s needs, and the corresponding supports that are required for their kinship carers

There are many children in Scotland living with kinship families who are not 'looked after' by their local authority

- A need for more research?
- Children in kinship families need support, regardless of legal basis
- Highly complex system, offering differing supports and entitlements depending on whether child is 'looked after' or not – needs simplified

Kinship carers are often supporting children with complex needs, and it is important that tailored support is in place for the children and their carers

- Importance of robust and helpful assessment and decision-making processes
- Need to reduce the complexity in benefits/allowances to ensure that all kinship families are supported financially



There is substantial variation across Scotland's local authorities in terms of how likely children are to live in kinship care arrangements

There is also evidence of regional variation in how long children spend living in kinship care, and what the legal basis is for their care

- How can we move away from different levels and depths of support across Scotland?
- The Scottish Government's Assessment Framework may help here

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/kinship-care-assessment-framework-2024/>

Educational outcomes remains an area where many children and families would benefit from additional support

- What does this mean for children who are living with kinship carers but who are not ‘looked after’, and so perhaps not as visible in terms of needing extra support?
- Can we work even more closely with Virtual School Head Teachers?

Other helpful things...

Evidence base that can help the **Promise Bill**, and any future Scottish Government **consultation** on kinship care

Evidence base that can help the future work of the Kinship Care Collaborative – building on:

- Updated **guidance** on kinship care assistance
- A new **Assessment Framework**

In summary...

Assessment and decision-making processes need to take account of this unique type of care for children; so that **decisions are made within a child's timeframe**, and so that kinship families receive the **support** they need

More **research** into the needs of children in kinship care who are **not 'looked after'**

In summary...

Easier access to emotional, practical and financial **supports and entitlements** - as well as more **educational** support

Supports should be **tailored** to reflect an individual kinship family's needs

More consistency across Scotland



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Thank you

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