

KINSHIP CARE IN ARGYLL AND BUTE

Kinship Care is a care arrangement provided by a child's extended family or by a close friend who has a pre-existing relationship with the child

Argyll and Bute has a general duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their community who are in need. This means that kinship carers and the children for whom they are caring can ask for assistance under this provision. Examples of the kind of help offered are advice and guidance regarding difficulties that children may be having, support to apply for benefits and information about other services.

Argyll and Bute Council may provide financial support via a Kinship Carer Allowance to carers who are caring for:

child's needs; the carer's own background and experience of being a parent and how the carer would parent the child; the carer's relationship to the birth parent and the implications of this for the child; the carer's ability to keep the child safe and to promote his health and development. This information is then considered by social work services.

Kinship carers who receive an allowance will have a social worker allocated to them who will be available to give advice and support to kinship carers on an individual basis. Kinship carers will be reviewed annually to consider any additional support needs. There are local support groups which meet regularly. These provide kinship carers with the opportunity to share experiences and to discuss issues with others in the same position. Training is also provided through this group.

Finances

To avoid financial hardship it is important that all kinship carers be advised to contact their local Citizens Advice Bureau for a 'better off' assessment at the earliest opportunity.