

SGO

Special Guardianship Order



Information for Children and Young People

What is a Special Guardianship Order?

A Special Guardianship Order (SGO) is made when the local authority and Court have decided that you cannot live with your Birth Parent/s on a permanent basis. SGO's are orders made by the Court, which name a Guardian who will have responsibility for you until you reach the age of 18 years. If you live with a Special Guardian this means you are no longer looked after (in care) and a social worker will no longer be involved to have meetings about your care plan.



Your Special Guardian must be over the age of 18 years and should have an existing or possible relationship with you, for example: Grandparents, Aunt, Uncle, Brother, Sister, other relatives or a family friend, neighbour, unrelated foster carer. You will live with your Special Guardian until you are 18 years old.

When the SGO is made you will also have a support plan. The support offered may include financial support to your Special Guardian, advice around time with you Birth Parent/s and talking support to help you understand your life story. Your SGO support plan will be reviewed every year by a worker from the SGO team.

When may a Special Guardianship Order be suitable?

A Special Guardianship Order may be particularly suitable for:

- Children in long-term foster care
- Children who are cared for on a permanent basis by members of their wider family
- Older children who wish to retain a legal link with their birth family, but who would benefit from more permanent care arrangements



Walsall Council

Parental Responsibility and SGO

When a SGO is made by the courts the Special Guardian gains legal parental responsibility for you. This means your Special Guardian will be responsible for the 'day to day' care and decision making for you, although your Birth Parent/s still retain some parental responsibility.



If there is conflict between your Birth Parent/s and your Special Guardian, then the views of your Special Guardian's are considered to be more important. For some decisions your Special Guardian must consult with your Birth Parents. These include: Taking you out of the country for more than three months and changing your surname.

Contact us

If you or your Special Guardian have any questions then you can contact the SGO Support Hub.

Walsall SGO Support Hub

Tel: 01922 652680

Email: ConnectedCarersSGODutyTeam@walsall.gov.uk

