

I'm Wondering...

What is guardianship?

You might be wondering what “Guardianship” means and why adults talk about it when they talk about the future.

Guardianship means that a court has decided who will make big decisions for a child until they turn 18.

This can include decisions about:

- Where you live
- School
- Health and medical care
- Safety

Guardianship is about decision-making, not about who you love or belong to.

It means adults are still figuring out the best next steps.

Some things guardianship can mean

Guardianship might mean:

- You stay living with the same carers long-term
- Big decisions are made by a guardian instead of parents
- Plans are made with the future in mind
- Things change less often

Different children have different guardianship plans.

Who is involved in this process:

- Your case worker
- Your carers
- Sometimes your birth family
- The Court magistrate
- A guardianship assessor

Here's one way to think about it:

Guardianship is about giving a child stability and clarity when adults believe this will help them feel safer growing up.

It is a legal arrangement made by adults to guide decisions — not a judgment about a child.



How some children might feel?

- Relieving
- Confusing
- Sad
- Unfair
- Scary
- Like things were decided without you
- Different at different times
- All of these feelings are allowed.

For adults supporting this child

- Separate guardianship from adoption clearly.
- Protect the child's family identity and story.
- Allow space for grief and relief together.

This is about long-term safety and belonging, not final answers.

If you want to...

- If you want to know who your guardian is, you can ask.
- If you want to understand what your parents can still be part of, you can ask about that too.
- If you feel mixed up about family, belonging, or the future, you can talk about it.
- If you don't want to talk right now, that's okay.
- You don't have to sort this out on your own.

One thing to remember:

Guardianship is about safety and stability, not about replacing your parents or erasing your family.

It's ok to wonder about where you belong.