

Shropshire Council Safeguarding

Children's Placement Service

Payment Arrangements for Foster Carers

1) Introduction

This document outlines the scheme for payment to foster carers offering family-based care to Shropshire children.

The arrangements outlined in this document represent a continued commitment to family-based care and a real attempt to recognise the skills and expertise of carers and reward them accordingly. It is also an attempt to reinforce the fair and transparent payment structure coupled with the Council's commitment to continue paying Fostering Network's recommended allowances and represents a realistic reward structure given the pressures on the public purse in 2015.

We believe that not only does the scheme afford carers the status they deserve by introducing a process whereby their expertise can be measured, but also raises the profile of family-based care in Shropshire and therefore renders us more effective in the area of carer retention and recruitment.

More importantly, by constantly striving to increase the skill base of all our foster carers we should see a consequent improvement in placement stability leading to better outcomes for Shropshire's looked after children.

The scheme is only available to foster carers approved by, and registered with, Shropshire Council. It is designed to recognise the range of skills and experience that carers and prospective carers possess, as well as the time and commitment involved in caring for children who are looked after by this Authority.

The scheme includes all approved foster carers except for those providing Supported Board and Lodgings, whose payments have been considered elsewhere.

2) Standards and Levels of Payment

Foster Care child allowances and Payment for Skills rates are reviewed annually. However, there cannot be a guaranteed increase in fees each year. New payment rates are circulated to all foster carers the beginning of each new financial year and are determined following a period of consultation in accordance with paragraph 28.3 of the Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards.

There will be 3 levels of skills payment, all of which involve payment of a fee in addition to the child allowance.

3) Outline of the Scheme

The basis of the scheme is that carers will be paid by reference to their skills, and consideration to the problems presented by individual children placed with them. The acquisition and subsequent maintenance of the necessary skills will be checked by reference to detailed examination of the

evidence through the completion of the relevant competency documents.

Carers in all placements will receive the basic fostering allowance for each child in their care, as set out in the table below. This is comprised of an appropriate allowance assessed on the needs of a child in care at a given age for food, clothing, transport, personal and household costs.

In addition to this, carers will receive a skills fee that is in line with an appropriate assessed and required level of skill, expertise and who are available to perform specific tasks to meet the needs of the child and \ or a range of children in their care as set out below will be eligible for Payments for Skills Fees.

Skill levels must be clearly demonstrated and evidenced by carers and will be assessed in accordance with the criteria below.

Payments for Skills Fees are payable for 52 weeks per year subject to certain conditions being met. The weekly rates are set out in the annexed table. The fees will start once the first child is in placement.

If a child is temporarily transferred to another carer then the allowance follows the child in such instances. Allowances to the main carer, however, will continue to be paid for a period of up to 2 weeks (maximum) where the child cared for returns home to family care on a trial basis. In exceptional circumstances this can be extended by senior management.

For carers offering respite, the payment will be as follows:

Up to 4 hours – ½ of the daily allowance.

Over 4 hours (including over nights) – the full daily allowance (1/7th of weekly allowance).

4) Annual Reviews

Regular supervision sessions which offer support and guidance will be undertaken by a nominated social worker in the fostering service. These will take place not less than every eight weeks and up to every four weeks. Every effort will be made to provide consistency in a nominated worker to help establish a relationship between carer and the service. Support for foster carers is highly recommended.

The first formal review will be held 6 months after the initial approval; thereafter, annual foster carer reviews will be held. Each review brings together the views of children and young people who have experience the placement in the reviewable period, the carers, the supervising social worker and the case management social workers.

The review is chaired by a person representing the Children's Placements service. This will be the opportunity for information regarding skills progression, abilities and learning to be shared and for a recommendation for continued registration for a further year to be agreed for presentation to the Fostering Panel.

Annual reviews are a formal part of the agreement for foster carers and are separate to their supervision. Supervision sessions will inform the annual review. Foster carers are expected to contribute to and attend review meetings.

Second and subsequent annual reviews will take place within 12 months of the last review and will follow the same format as outlined above. If there are issues or concerns identified then these may need to be presented to Fostering Panel.

Following discussions at the annual foster carer review, the evidence for progression of Payment for Skills will be presented to the Team Manager of Children's Placements as this is an operational decision-making process. The final decision regarding approval, however, once all the required criteria have been met, rests with the Service Manager who will take into account the evidence presented and the Team Manager's views.

NB: Any newly appointed carers with previous fostering or relevant professional childcare experience may enter the scheme at a higher level, subject to appropriate approval.

5) Contact with birth family and friends

Maintaining contact with birth family and friends is a duty of the Local Authority and an important part of the child's life during separation, whether this is temporary or to be permanent in the long term. As corporate parents we will always seek to support a child to maintain a level of contact that is in their best interest and as such a carer, on behalf of the Local Authority, is expected to support the agreed plan of contact in a child's Care Plan.

We recognise however that supporting and facilitating contact with birth parents can be a challenge and below we identify core responsibilities that reflect the level of expertise of the carer.

Level 1: carer may be expected to facilitate contact with birth family as part of a child care plan if the identified risks are minimal and can be managed in agreement with all parties ie child's social worker, supervising fostering social worker, carers. This includes taking and collecting children from contact sessions and having direct contact with parents through a supervising worker (this is determined on a case by case basis and should take into account the situation and logistics of all placements in care at the time).

Level 2: carer will facilitate and may be expected to supervise contact with birth family. This includes taking and collecting children from contact sessions and having direct contact with parents or through a supervising worker if necessary (this is determined on a case by case basis and should take into account the situation and logistics of all placements in care at the time).

Level 3: carer will supervise contact with birth family as identified and within the child's care plan (this is determined on a case by case basis and should take into account the situation and logistics of all placements in care at the time).

In all cases a risk assessment will be undertaken by the foster care social worker. Where the

assessments identifies any risk, an action plan to minimise and manage any risk to the carer or the placement stability will be put in place and agreed by all parties i.e. foster carer supervising fostering social worker, and child's social worker.

6) Progression process from Level One to Two and Three

Carers may be approved as carers for specified children (for example single or long term placement, or connected persons), or carers for non-specified children who are expected to take potential multiple placements. Carers of specified children will only ever care for the children who are already placed with them and will not be expected to undertake the same training requirements and care planning duties as carers of non-specified children. To progress from Levels One, to Two and Three the competencies set out will need to be clearly evidenced from the supervising social worker that the skills and experience are required, alongside the demonstration by the carer themselves in the care provided.

For those assessed as carers for specific children the skill level will be identified in the connected person assessment and will take into account the needs of the connected child. This skill level will be subject to review through the annual review process as detailed earlier in this document.

The Payment for Skills Fees are available to carers throughout the year, regardless of whether a child is placed with them. As a minimum all carers will start at level 1 to reflect the role, expertise and skills required to care for any child for whom they are not the birth parent.

Should an allegation that has reached the threshold for an investigation under s47, Children Act 1989, be made against a foster carer whilst being assessed for progression then the process would be suspended until appropriate investigations are completed.

Once the allegation investigation is completed the supervising social worker will complete report of outcomes with a recommendation as to whether the next competency level of progression should continue or not and any relevant recommendations regarding the carers continued practice and level of competence highlighted as an issue in the complaint/investigation.

The Team Manager will have discretion to agree progression in such matters although foster carers can make a written representation to the Service Manager should they wish to challenge the decision of the Team Manager.

Supervising Social workers must stress that the competencies are only one element of the overall criteria that must be met for progression, and actual performance plays a significant part. 'Performance' will be measured by paying close attention to outcomes for children in placement.

Research indicates the following areas are crucially important in determining whether or not a placement has been successful and supervising social workers assessing the case for progression will pay close attention to these areas :

- Did the placement(s) last as long as needed?

- Did the child (ren) participate in decisions affecting their day to day care in placement?
- Was contact maintained with family, friends?
- Did the child's well-being improve as a result of the placement?
- Was the child supported to engage in a healthy active lifestyle?
- Were the child's health and educational needs met as well or better in the foster placement than before?
- Was the child's identity (racial, cultural, and religious) respected?
- Was the child able to move-on successfully with the minimum stress and disruption?
- Was the child generally satisfied with the placement?

Clearly, these factors are not solely in the hands of carers and other professionals need to play their part in contributing to a successful placement outcome. It is important, however, for assessing social workers to identify the role played by carers in attempting to deliver on the aforementioned outcomes.

In addition to the requirements for contact with birth families set out in Section 5, the following skills and duties are required of carers at the following levels (all of the criteria must be fulfilled to achieve the relevant skill level) and all progression is subject to case by case decision making:

6.1 Level One

Carers at Level One are expected to:

- Have completed the relevant training procedures for Shropshire Council foster carers and the Training Support and Development standards
- Care for children on both a short and long-term basis
- Assist in preparing for moving children on to further or permanent placements
- Attend support groups on a regular basis
- may be expected to facilitate and may supervise contact with birth family as part of a child care plan if the identified risks are minimal and can be managed appropriately

6.1 Level two

Carers at level 2 are expected to have and demonstrate:

- Accept multiple child placements including potential unplanned and unannounced placements
- A minimum of 12 months fostering experience or if skills assessed as having relevant child related professional experience at this level
- Completion of mandatory courses
- Completion of additional training courses as set out in the **Foster Carers Training And Support Strategy** (by both carers in a two carer household) and any training as identified as part of annual review or safeguarding investigation
- Carer will facilitate contact and may be expected to supervise contact with birth family. This includes taking and collecting children from contact sessions and having direct contact with a parents.

Competencies detailed for Level Two must be clearly understood and demonstrated in the care

offered. The carer and Supervising Social Worker must produce evidence, for each competency, to satisfy the Children's Placements Manager, that they are all met.

6.2 Level Three

Progression to Level Three by a carer who has already achieved Level Two is when the following additional criteria are fulfilled:-

- A minimum of 2 years fostering or relevant child related professional experience
- Completion of the eleven mandatory courses
- Additional training course as detailed in foster carers training and support strategy (by both carers in a two carer household) and any training as identified as part of annual review or safeguarding investigation
- Take children who have been in residential placements and are stepping back into a family care arrangement
- Demonstrate an ability to work independently of the social worker in 'partnership' with other professionals responsible for delivering against the child's care plan
- Engage in regular mentoring or "buddying" and/or training of other carers
- **will supervise** contact with birth family as identified and within the child's care plan

NB: Mentoring or buddying can be defined as follows: The foster carers mentoring role as one in which the more experienced carer would support a more recently approved carer in developing specific skills and knowledge that will enhance and develop the less-experienced carers professional and personal growth.

As such they will provide guidance their colleague about a specific issue, coach them in developing a particular skill, facilitate their development by sharing resources, contact and networks, challenge them to move beyond their comfort zone with particular issues that may arise in placement, help the carer to reflect and develop following challenging or difficult issues as they arise.

In this way they will act as an experienced and trusted colleague, guiding them on practice, acting as a confident or consultant when the carer doesn't wish to initially discuss particular issues with their link worker

7) Exceptional Skills payment

We expect a high standard of care and commitment from all foster carers to enabling children in their care to achieve outcomes against their care plan. Levels 1, 2 and 3 skills payments is the financial reward given for this however we also believe that for certain children the level of skill and commitment required for a period of time may mean that a carer has to go "above and beyond".

It is anticipated that exceptional skills payment will relate to larger sibling groups, teenage

placements or younger children with significantly challenging behaviours.

Requests for an exceptional skills payment will be made after each successful three month period in placement.

These payments are discretionary and will be paid where the carer has been able to demonstrate care skills and commitment “above and beyond” that has met a child or young person’s needs and has achieved excellent outcomes as determined by the child’s care plan and placement plan

An exceptional skills payment of £250 can be made for a child covering a three month period of outcomes achieved. If a second three months period of outcomes is achieved a new application and decision will be reached. The maximum payment for any single child in one year is therefore £1,000.

Criteria for exceptional skills: a child has been in placement for a minimum of three months and has achieved exceptional outcomes against their care plan sustained for a three month period

AND

The skills and commitment of the carers have gone “above and beyond” good quality standard care and have they been a primary contributor to enabling the child to reach these outcomes

Example:

- School attendance has been below 60% and has increased in excess of 85%
- The child has for the first time engaged in a social or leisure activity that has significantly promoted their opportunity to develop peer friendships, age appropriate independence and to improve their self-esteem
- The child’s previous anti-social behaviour in school or the community has been seen to make significant improvements verified by external parties

8) Demonstrating Competency: Examples

Use of existing processes as evidence e.g. Childs feedback to IRO and LAC reviews, foster carer agreement, diary, supervising social worker visits to carer - both announced and unannounced - Health and Safety checklist and supervision records.

Other sources of evidence e.g. use of feedback from child’s social worker via end of placement reports/review document and feedback from parents.

Portfolio approach by carer - other sources, videos, group discussions.

Other evidence-based assessment processes e.g. Ofsted, Training Support and Development (TSD) standards.

Standardised format regarding content and recording of supervising social worker visits to carers

incorporating checklist against competencies/criteria, contact sheets, supervision records etc.

This is not an exhaustive list and carers can provide a range of evidence they feel reflects the work they have done and what they have achieved for children in their care.

9) Training and Support

All carers will have the opportunity to attend carer forums. These forums offer the possibility for carers carrying out similar tasks to meet each other, share their experiences and learning. It is encouraged that all carers attend such forums and encourage new carers to do likewise.

Following approval from Panel, Foster Carers are expected to complete the Training and Development Standards (TSD's) which are set out by the Department for Education and show the areas of skills and knowledge that all carers need to achieve and evidence in the first 12 months of their Fostering journey (18 months for Family and Friends Carers). It is a statutory requirement that these are completed as set out in Fostering regulations for all foster carers.

Induction

During the first 12 months carers will have the opportunity to attend a number of courses which make up the induction training offer. Each of these courses will provide evidence to assist in meeting the TSD's as well as providing specific knowledge and skill development in a variety of areas. Inclusive of skills to foster there are 5 induction courses that must be completed by all carers and these should be completed within the first 12 months of approval.

Core

Once carers have successfully completed their induction and TSD's, core training courses will be available to attend. These core training courses are designed to further develop carer's skills and confidence within the role, these courses need to be completed within the second year of fostering.

Enhanced

Carers that have been fostering for 24+ months are then invited to attend enhanced courses and they are courses which will be based around specific care areas and issues.

Bespoke

Carers can use supervision with their Supervising Social Worker to discuss in depth their training needs and any Bespoke training will need to be identified on their Personal Development Plans.

It is the responsibility of the supervising social worker, in discussion with the carer, to identify each carer's training needs beyond the core training identified below. These needs will be discussed, agreed and updated at each annual review.

There are courses that all foster carers at Levels One, Two and Three are expected to attend. These are:

- First Aid
- Promoting Health and Education
- Solihull Approach (parenting model) – Understanding your Child and Teen
- Child Protection basic Awareness
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Loss, Grief and Bereavement
- Child development
- Safer caring including Allegations against foster carers
- Attachment (part 1,2 and 3)
- Contact
- Infection control

10. Headline additional payment information

In addition to any increase in allowances and the payment for skills levels the following additional payments will also apply:

Payment of Birthday/Christmas or Festival/Holiday allowances for the child

Mileage will be paid at **0.45p** per mile for travel to school, travel to Contact, travel to health appointments and travel incurred in supporting the child to meet tasks and undertake activities within their care plan. This will include travel to clubs up to two per week per child, *any activity up to a 30 mile radius*. This does not include holidays, day trips or shopping expeditions.

There will also be a holiday grant of **£150.00** for each child under 14, and **£200.00** for each child aged 14 and over, payable during the first week of June.

A holiday allowance of **£300.00** will also be paid to foster carers payable during the first pay week in June.

10a Holiday arrangements for Carers

Carers are eligible for 2 weeks *paid* respite holiday per year. Carers who are looking after children with challenging and demanding behaviours requiring significantly high levels of supervision are particularly encouraged to take this carers respite holiday opportunity. As always, arrangements for alternative care should be made with the interest of the child as paramount and as such save in exceptional circumstances we expect carers to make arrangement with their back up carers to provide the respite care provision during their holiday. If there isn't a designated back up carer consideration can be given to family and friends of the carer subject to satisfactory police and local authority checks. This will support smooth planning arrangements and importantly provide a familiar carer for the child.

11. Ceasing the Skills based payment

The fee will be paid from the date of a foster carers' first placement, then paid 52 weeks per year irrespective of a child being in placement. This includes when a carer is on holiday for up to two weeks or during an agreed break of up to seven days following a difficult placement.

Longer breaks, unless agreed with the Children's Placement Team Manager, will result in skills based payment being suspended (unless mitigating circumstances exist).

The exception to this rule is when a carer refuses to take a placement on two successive occasions which has been deemed by the CPS Duty system as a suitable match. Unless unusual and mitigating circumstances are evident, the skills based payment will be withdrawn

NB: The offer of placement must be within the carers' registration age group and deemed by the CPS duty system as appropriate. If refusal on two occasions occurs then this will trigger an annual review. This will not apply in cases where a formal agreement has been made not to place in order to protect a child already in placement for a specific period.

If a carer remains without a placement for 12 consecutive months or more (for whatever reason), then a reassessment and panel re-approval must take place before caring can resume.

All carers will be expected to give 28 days' notice of their intention to end a placement and (at the very minimum 7 working days). No placement will end, irrespective of the time frame, without first having attended a placement consolidation meeting, and have the change of care plan agreed by the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO).

Foster carers will be faced with suspension from caring and their fee payment temporarily withdrawn should they demand that a child be removed from their care with immediate effect.

Having children ejected from foster placements in this manner is totally unacceptable and contrary to the best principles of placement stability. However, suspension will not follow if serious and clearly evidenced health and safety issues have resulted in a carer requesting immediate removal.

12. Safeguarding Allegation against carers

If a carer is suspended and children removed following an allegation the fee will be paid for up to 8 weeks following the date of a strategy meeting recommending investigation.

Whether or not payments continue beyond the 8 week point is discretionary and will be decided on a case by case basis by the Team Manager who will consider any mitigating circumstances leading to a delay in resolution which may be outside the carer's control.

In cases where concerns have come to light regarding a Foster Carers' practice which do not meet the more serious allegations threshold then CPS reserve the right to suspend the fee until such issues are investigated and addressed. However every effort will be made to prioritise completion of any such investigation and it is expected this will be completed in no more than 28 working days

13. Carer ill health

If a carer is unable to take a placement on the grounds of ill health we would need this certifying within 7 days. If not the fee payment will cease. After receipt of certification up to or on the 7th day the fee will be paid at the full rate for the first two months of sickness absence; half-rate for the

following two months at which point payments would cease until a resumption of fostering occurred. The fee would be reinstated at any point during this four month period should fostering resume. On returning from a break due to certified sickness the foster carer in question must foster for an unbroken period of four months before gaining entitlement to these arrangements for a further period. If a carer remains inactive due to ill health for a period of twelve months or more a re-assessment, plus a medical will need to take place before they can resume their fostering career.

14. Implications of a Reward Element

Receiving a reward element as a carer can be of concern to some people, in relation to tax, and in particular, benefits. It is hoped the following notes will be of help: -

14.1 Income Tax

When you start fostering there is no one to tell HMRC about your income, except you. You will need to complete a Self-Assessment tax return each year and send it to HMRC.

The quickest and easiest way to register your self-employment is online. When you use this method, you will also automatically be signed up for the Self-Assessment Online Service.

The simplified income tax scheme for foster carers is called 'qualifying care relief' by HMRC. Foster carers who are full time or part time, such as day carers and respite carers, can all use qualifying care relief. The scheme uses an income threshold to work out how much tax, if any, is due. As long as your total income from fostering is below the threshold, there is no tax due on fostering income.

If you have income from fostering above the threshold, you can choose to work out your taxable profit in the normal way for self-employed people (by setting allowable expenses against your income from fostering). Alternatively, the simplified method means you can simply treat the amount by which your income from fostering is above the threshold as your taxable profit.

The threshold for the foster care tax relief scheme has two elements

- A fixed amount of £10,000* per year. This is applied pro-rata if you were approved part-way through the year.
- Additional amount per child depending on age: £200* per week for every child aged 0-10 and £250* per week for every child aged 11- 18. Part of a week counts as a full week

* These figures may be subject to change from year to year.

At the end of each financial year, Shropshire Council is responsible for providing carers with a statement of their reward element. This statement will be made minus the agreed costs of providing a service.

14.2 National Insurance

All self-employed people who are aged 16 and over, but below women's pension age or 65 (for men), must register to pay Class 2 NICs. These are set at £2.70 a week for 2013/14. HMRC's Internal Adviser's Guide states that all foster carers should register as self-employed (for national insurance purposes), even when they are exempt from income tax

14.3 National Insurance Credits and Home Responsibilities Protection (HRP)

Prior to 6 April 2010, you could claim HRP to protect your state pension. This has now ended, replaced by a system of national insurance credits (NI credits) for parents of children under 12 and foster carers. Since 6 April 2010, you have been able to build up qualifying years for the basic State Pension and additional State Pension through new weekly NI credits. If you are a foster carer or parent, you can get an NI credit for each week in which any of the following apply:

- You are the parent of a child aged under 12 and care for them, but don't receive Child Benefit for the child
- You are an approved foster carer.

There is no limit to the number of years in which you can get credits, as long as you meet the qualifying rules. Applications for NI credits can be made on form CF411A (available from Job Centre Plus or tax offices, or by calling HMRC on 0845 302 1479 or at www.hmrc.gov.uk/forms/cf411A.pdf) and must be made within one year of the end of the tax year.

14.4 Foster care and Tax Credits

Working tax credit (WTC) tops up the income of low paid workers. Fostering counts as self-employment, so you might be entitled to WTC, as your profit from fostering, for tax purposes, is nil or very small. If you have children of your own, you are possibly entitled to child tax credit (CTC) too. Fostered children do not count for CTC and cannot be included in your claim.

You can check your entitlement and claim tax credits by phoning the Tax Credits Helpline on 0845 300 3900. There is more information about WTC in the Fostering Network's Signposts in Fostering booklet Benefits. From October 2013, as part of a bigger welfare reform plan, WTC and CTC will begin to be replaced by a new benefit called Universal Credit although this will take around 4 years to be fully implemented. Foster carers may be able to get additional financial help through Universal Credit, as it removes the distinction between being 'in-work' (and claiming working tax credit) and out of work (and claiming income support, ESA, JSA, etc) . Those benefits, as well as housing benefit, will also be incorporated into Universal Credit, paid by the DWP.

Fostering Network provide helpful information leaflets on national insurance, tax, benefits and pension contributions.

Appendix

Shropshire Council Carers Allowances

To take effect from 01/04/2016

Age	Recommended Weekly Allowance	Daily Basic
0 - 4	£142.86	£20.41
5 - 10	£162.73	£23.24
11 - 15	£202.58	£29.84
16 +	£246.44	£35.20

Skill Level	Weekly payment
One	£58.00 per week
Two	£115.00 per week
Three	£225.00 per week
Exceptional Skills	£250.00 for 1 x 3 month period of exceptional achievement

Breakdown of Fostering Allowances

Age	Food	Clothing	Transport	Personal	Household	Total Allowance
0 - 4	49.96	30.77	11.76	8.41	41.96	142.86
5 - 10	53.38	41.50	11.72	12.76	43.37	162.73
11 - 15	66.49	51.62	22.89	19.85	41.71	202.58
16+	76.02	62.89	22.86	41.12	43.55	246.44

(Birthday allowance will be paid one week in advance of the birthday.)

(Allowances are paid fortnightly unless alternative arrangements are made in exceptional circumstances.)

Festival Allowances

0 - 4 years	£57.00
5 - 7 years	£59.00
8 - 10 years	£62.00
11 - 13 years	£64.00
14 – 15 years	£66.00
16+	£68.00

Birthday Allowances

0 - 4 years	£44.00
5 - 7 years	£48.00
8 - 10 years	£54.00
11 - 13 years	£62.00
14 - 15 years	£68.00
16+	£74.00

Holiday Allowance

The carer/s should be able to evidence how this grant contributes to either a family holiday with the young person/s or additional holiday activities for the child or young person.

These can be applied for at the following rates:

A grant of **£150.00** for each child under 14, payable during the first pay week in June.

A grant of **£200.00** for each child aged 14 and over, payable during the first pay week in June.

A Holiday Allowance of **£300.00** to Foster Parents payable during the first pay week in June.

A Holiday Allowance of **£110.00** to Shared Care and Respite Carers payable during the first week in June *if they take the young person on holiday to support the adult costs.*

School Uniforms (where required)

Children starting junior school	£87.00
Children transferring to secondary	£222.00

(Payable in August, or the month prior to the child starting school)

Guidance for Pocket Money –for 2016

Fostered children's pocket monies are considered to be part of the basic allowance. The following guidance is given for the rates recommended for pocket monies:

0 - 4 years	£3.10
-------------	-------

5 - 7 years	£4.78
8 - 10 years	£6.46
11 - 13 years	£8.39
14 – 15 years	£10.18
16+	£11.85

Initial clothing

This is a discretionary allowance and applications should be made to the relevant Team Manager. Case Managers should seek the co-operation of those who hold parental responsibility to make sure that the child has adequate personal clothing and personal effects collected from home to take with them when they are looked after. In relation to the revised allowances structure, an initial clothing allowance may not be required in each case but can be applied for up to a maximum amount of:

0 - 4 years	£100.00
5 - 7 years	£100.00
8 - 10 years	£150.00
11 - 13 years	£150.00
14 - 15 years	£200.00
16+	£200.00

Mileage Allowances

The weekly allowance includes an amount to cover the transport costs of each foster child for things that are child related such as school or attendance at leisure activities. For a child up to the age of eleven this equates to 35 miles each week, for a young person eleven to fifteen it is 70 miles each week.

Where a carer can show over a four week period that they have exceeded this then the additional mileage will be paid at the rate of **0.45p** per mile.

NB: Carers can no longer claim for car travel to a holiday destination

Young Persons in work-contribution to care

When a young person is over the age of 16 and is working, they are expected to contribute towards their maintenance. The young person will be expected to contribute directly to the carers in this way unless in full-time education, or when it can be proven that they cannot secure a job, grant or benefits.

The boarding out allowances will be reduced by this amount accordingly. It is essential therefore that the Link Social Worker (CPS) is informed if a young person is working.

£10 per week for young people on a youth training scheme or one-third of the young person's wage income

Allowances for working young people in lodgings or with foster parents or in community

homes

The following payment can be made to young people from allowances made in lieu of pocket money and in recognition that the young person may not receive any benefits. If working or unemployed through no fault of their own:

Age 16:	£10.50
Age 17:	£13.00
Age 18:	£15.50

If not working through their own fault:

Age 16:	£7.60
Age 17:	£7.60
Age 18:	£13.00

Community Homes: Birthday and Christmas Allowances

Festival Allowances

0 - 4 years	£57.00
5 - 7 years	£59.00
8 - 10 years	£62.00
11 - 13 years	£64.00
14 - 15 years	£66.00
16+	£68.00

Birthday Allowances

0 - 4 years	£44.00
5 - 7 years	£48.00
8 - 10 years	£54.00
11 - 13 years	£62.00
14 - 15 years	£68.00
16+	£74.00

CHILD ARRANGEMENT ALLOWANCES - RATES OF PAYMENT & FINANCIAL CRITERIA

To take effect from 01/04/2016

The rates of payment set out below apply to all cases where a Child Arrangement Order allowance is deemed payable under the criteria set out in the Policy and Procedural item regarding Child Arrangement Order Allowance.

- 1 Child aged 0 - 10 years **£57.00** per week
- 2 Child aged 11 - 18 years **£64.50** per week

Child Benefit of **£13.40** per week will be deducted unless the Child Arrangement Order applicants are in receipt of income support.

Income ceilings of Child Arrangement Order Applicant to enable payment of Child Arrangement Order Allowances are as follows.

- 1 One child £12,000 per annum gross

- 2 Two children £18,000 per annum gross
- 3 Three children £24,000 per annum gross
- 4 Four children £30,000 per annum gross

Where prospective Child Arrangement Order Applicants have savings the following will apply:

No allowance payable in the following circumstances.

- 1 One child - savings above £10,000
- 2 Two children - savings above £14,000
- 3 Three children - savings above £18,000
- 4 Four children - savings above £22,000

The above will apply in respect of all adoptive placements and includes adoption by foster parents. As from 1 August 1995 no enhancement of allowances will be payable as part of the Child Arrangement Order allowance. Enhancements will continue to be paid where they were agreed prior to that date and are subject to annual review.

ADOPTION ALLOWANCES - RATES OF PAYMENT AND FINANCIAL CRITERIA

To take effect from 01/04/2016

The rates of payment set out below apply to all cases where an adoption allowance is deemed payable under the criteria set out in the Policy and Procedural Item the Adoption Allowances Regulations 1991.

- 1 Child aged 0 - 10 years **£57.00** per week
- 2 Child aged 11 - 18 years **£64.50** per week

Child Benefit of **£13.40** per week will be deducted unless the adoptive parents are in receipt of income support.

Income ceiling of prospective adoptive parents to enable payment of an adoption allowance are as follows:

- 1 One child £12,000 per annum gross
- 2 Two children £18,000 per annum gross
- 3 Three children £24,000 per annum gross
- 4 Four children £30,000 per annum gross

Where prospective adoptive parents have savings the following will apply:

No allowance payable in the following circumstances.

- 1 One child - savings above £10,000
- 2 Two children - savings above £14,000
- 3 Three children - savings above £18,000
- 4 Four children - savings above £22,000

The above will apply in respect of all adoptive placements and includes adoption by foster carers. As from 1 August 1995 no enhancement of allowances will be payable as part of an adoption allowance. Enhancements will continue to be paid where they were agreed prior to that date and are subject to annual review.