

Fostering Payment Scheme 2020/21

Mainstream carers

This scheme sets out a framework for payments to carers and the allowances and fees are uplifted each year and the framework is redistributed annually.

Purpose:

The department recognises the valuable contribution of foster carers and wishes to financially support children in foster placements to achieve the best outcomes, whilst exercising probity of the public purse.

Uplift 01.04.2020

Mainstream Foster Carers Weekly Child's Allowance and Skills Fee			
Age Range	Child's Allowance	Skills Fee	Total Weekly amount per child
0 – 4	£185.00 (£26.43 per day)	£165 (£23.57 per day)	£350.00
5 – 10	£211.00 (£30.14 per day)	£165	£376.00
11 – 14	£262.00 (£37.43 per day)	£165	£427.00
15 – 18	£318.00 (£45.43 per day)	£165	£483.00

Additional Payments			
	Birthday	Festival	Holiday (x 3 Child's Allowance)
0 - 4	£150	£150	£555.00
5 - 10	£150	£150	£633.00
11 - 14	£200	£200	£786.00
15 - 18	£200	£200	£954.00

Disability premium- The premium applies only to the child allowance at a rate of £350 per week/£50 per day pro rata.

The child must have a profound complex disability/medical diagnosis which requires 24 hour care and supervision. Only the Supervising Social Worker and child's social worker can request the premium, it is not available on the observations of a foster carer. All qualifying children must be agreed by a senior manager in the Department – Director or HSSWs before any payments are made. Social Security have provided reference to the legal requirements around making payment of a child's DLA to people other than parents which are complex and require some further discussions with them to ensure this can be delivered for children in care. The Department will advise further on this once a position has been agreed.

Breakdown of Child's Allowance

The items set out below provides a general guide for expectations of how foster carers should spend the Child's Allowance in relation to the child or young person they are caring for. These rates should be used as a minimum standard and guide only.

Age	Accommodation (30%)	Household (18%)	Food and Housekeeping (21%)	Clothing (10%)	Personal/Hobbies (9%)	Pocket Money (5%)	Transport (7%)
0 – 4	£55.50	£33.30	£38.85	£18.50	£16.65	£9.25	£12.95
5 – 10	£63.30	£37.98	£44.31	£21.10	£18.99	£10.55	£14.77
11 – 14	£78.60	£47.16	£55.02	£26.20	£23.58	£13.10	£18.34
15 – 18	£95.40	£57.24	£66.78	£31.80	£28.62	£15.90	£22.26

Item	Guidance on use of payment
Clothing Allowance	<p>The clothing allowance can be used flexibly by the foster carer to buy clothes directly for younger children; or be given to older children / young people on a weekly/monthly basis to purchase their own clothing. Older young people should be encouraged to take responsibility for some of this allowance as part of developing independence skills and learning to budget.</p> <p>The clothing allowance should be used to purchase school uniforms and casual clothing/footwear or buy replacement school uniforms. However, if a child/young person changes or commences at a new school and an entirely new uniform is required, an additional school clothing allowance will be provided up to the amount of £200 (receipts to be handed in with claim).</p> <p>Where a young person wishes to attend a school from an allowance of up to £200 for the purchase of an outfit can be claimed (receipt to be handed in with claim).</p> <p>Foster carers of young people aged sixteen and over should ensure that the young person has sufficient suitable clothing and footwear for formal interview situations, education, and training or employment opportunities and for their future move to independence.</p>
Education	<p>Standard materials that are required for children and young people's school attendance and activities are provided for within the child's allowance.</p> <p>The child's allowance provides for the purchase of a yearly school photograph and for regular local school trips and activities. Major school trips away from the Island will require the foster carer to discuss with the child's social worker or supervising social worker and if supported then a special funding request should be made to the Department.</p> <p>Access to a computer with internet connection, appropriately safeguarded, is essential for high school age children to enable them to complete assignments and undertake research.</p>

Holiday clubs and activities	<p>The child's allowance provides for the provision of holiday clubs and activities during term time and for part of the holiday period.</p> <p>Children should not spend all their school breaks in play schemes, unless there are special circumstances agreed with the Supervising Social Worker and Child's Social Worker.</p>
Luggage	<p>The child's allowance provides for the purchase of two items of luggage for all children and young people.</p> <p>All young people moving to independence or between placements must have appropriate personal luggage. Children should never move with their possessions in bin liners. The supervising social worker should ensure this occurs at first placement and moves with the child.</p>
Personal leisure and hobbies / allowance	<p>The personal leisure and hobbies payment is provided to enable children and young people to engage in hobbies which will develop their self-esteem such as sport or playing a musical instrument.</p> <p>This element of the child's allowance may also be used to pay for membership of a hobby sporting or leisure club.</p> <p>Children and young people should be encouraged to take part in at least one social activity each week.</p>
Pocket Money	<p>The pocket money allowance is provided for children and young people for their general and personal needs. The amount of pocket money should be agreed at the placement planning meeting and this should be given on a weekly basis to the child or young person. The table above provides guidance on how much the foster carer should provide as a minimum.</p> <p>Arrangements for savings accounts for children and young people who have been in care for more than 12 months are still to be determined by the Department, and no carer should undertake this task until a position has been established.</p> <p>Should a young person wish to open their own bank account or already have one this should be discussed with the child's social worker.</p>
Travel	<p>The child's allowance is provided to cover any aspect of transporting the child or young person in placement associated with their LAC status.</p> <p>For instance, transportation to and from contact, review meetings, professionals meetings etc. It also covers transportation to meet their basic care needs, for instance to and from school, health appointments or leisure activities.</p>

	<p>The transport allowance is calculated as covering the first 40 miles of transport each week [160 miles per month] or bus travel up to the minimum amount in the table above (per child) and is expected to be sufficient to cover normal weekly activities.</p> <p>Exceptional travel, exceeding the 40 miles per week, must be approved by the Supervising Social Worker and form part of the care plan for the child.</p> <p>Additional miles will be paid at £0.50p per mile.</p> <p>Claim forms will need to be approved by the Supervising Social Worker and must be submitted within two weeks of each month end. For example, mileage accrued in January would need to be submitted by the 14th February .</p> <p>Claims received after the required time will not be processed. Where appropriate and depending on an assessment of need that takes into account the young person’s age and maturity, young people should be encouraged to use public transport.</p> <p>This will help them develop their independence skills so that they can take advantage of education, training and employment opportunities and develop leisure and personal interests. The travel element of the allowance is to be reviewed by the Department.</p>
Child’s holiday allowance	<p>The Department supports children in the foster home being treated as “part of the family” and that includes going on holiday. An annual holiday allowance is provided for each Looked after child. Please see table above.</p> <p>A separate claim form for each child will need to be submitted with receipts. Each holiday activity claimed for will be deducted from the overall allowance</p> <p>This maximum allowance available covers an annual holiday for the child. Proof of the level of expenditure on the child would be required with the claim. If the child is having more than 1 holiday with their carers separate claims up to the maximum can be made.</p> <p>Any balance remaining at the end of the financial year will not be carried over.</p> <p>Additional funding for exceptional holidays above the annual allowance will be considered by the Department if supported by the child’s social worker and a request for special funding is made. The Department does not support foster children being removed from school routinely to take holidays.</p>
Childminding	

costs – occasional need	<p>It is acknowledged that on occasions fostercarer’s may need to attend meetings training, or a personal matter. In these instances the carers would be encouraged to use their own support network approved by the supervising social worker.</p> <p>Where this isn’t available the matter should be discussed with the supervising social worker who can advise and assist in seeking a resolution, and in exceptional circumstances a child minder may be agreed.</p>
Childminding / Day Care costs – regular use [such as working carers]	<p>Regular childminding arrangements for a child in foster care would only be considered in exceptional circumstances where the child’s social worker had assessed it as necessary in response to the child’s needs.</p> <p>If a foster carer requires regular child minding because they work or are not available to the child on a regular basis then the supervising social worker will discuss how the allowance will be adjusted and reduced to meet the child minding fees. Either through deduction of costs or deduction to contribute to the costs if in excess of the allowance.</p> <p>As a matter of good practice, pre-school age children should be placed with carers where at least one carer is available during the day to care for the child.</p> <p>Where this match hasn’t been achieved and full or part time day care needs to be organised a discussion should take place with the Family Placement Service regarding how this is best achieved. For instance, another foster carer may be in a position to offer day care for under 2’s, rather than use a Nursery or child minder</p>

Other Exceptional and Discretionary Payments available	
Emergency Clothing Grant	<p>An emergency clothing grant is paid where a child being accommodated does not have adequate clothing for everyday needs. The grant can be any amount up to £250 upon presenting receipts.</p> <p>When a child is first placed foster carers and Supervising Social Workers in conjunction with the child’s social worker will assess the clothing the child has arrived with to determine if it is adequate, if not, then the requisite items should be purchased and receipts kept.</p> <p>Once the carer is in receipt of the weekly child’s allowance, it is expected that further clothing required is covered by that allowance.</p>
Expenses relating to children moving onto adoption	<p>Where foster carers incur costs relating to extending day long hospitality (to include the provision of at least 2 meals and drinks) to prospective adoptive carers as part of the introductory process, foster carers can claim £35 per day to cover such.</p>
Disturbance Allowance	<p>Where foster carers who are authorised to take emergency placements</p>

	are contacted regarding a placement after 5 pm the carers are entitled to claim £35 disturbance allowance (whether or not the placement is then subsequently made).
Introduce a friend	Where a foster carer introduces someone from their friends or family network who is interested in becoming a foster carer they will be paid the sum of £500 once those individuals are approved and registered and take their first placement.
Retainer	<p>Providing a child leaves a placement in planned way as a result of a change of care plan (i.e. return home or move to permanence placement or independence) a retainer (equivalent to the weekly Skills Fee) will be paid for up to 4 weeks following the end of the placement.</p> <p>This is only paid if the carer is immediately available to take a new placement within their approval category.</p>
Carer Holiday –	<p>Where carers are using their 3 weeks holiday per year [without the child], they will receive their Skills Fee, but not the Child's Allowance.</p> <p>If the carers do not wish to take this holiday from caring, which may particularly be the case where long-term matched child(ren) are in placement, they can claim 3 x the Skills Fee per child as an additional grant.</p> <p><u>The child will need to have been in placement for 12 months for this to be applied</u></p>
Child's Respite	<p>If as part of their Care Plan the child has regular respite with another carer, the main carers will still receive their full Skills Fee.</p> <p>The child's allowance will be pro rata between the main and respite carers, dependent on the split of days between the two carers.</p> <p>For example, Mon-Friday with main carer and Sat-Sun with respite carer the child's allowance would be 5/7ths to main carer and 2/7ths to respite carer).</p> <p>The respite carer would also receive 2/7ths of the weekly Skills Fee</p>
Retainers during an investigation (where the child has been removed.)	During an investigation, the foster carer will be paid a retainer equivalent to the weekly Skills Fee. However, the child's allowance will not be paid during this period. This will be paid for a maximum of 12 weeks.
Summer holiday allowance (for school aged children only)_	<p>At the beginning of the summer holidays, an additional one week's child allowance will be paid. This is applicable to mainstream and Family and Friend's carers.</p> <p>Children should not spend all their school breaks in play schemes, unless there are special circumstances, which have been agreed with the Supervising Social Worker and Child's Social Worker.</p>

Staying Put	<p>Upon the Children & Families' Director approving the Staying Put arrangement, an allowance of £250 per week will be paid to the carers, if the young person is in full-time education and over the age of 18 years.</p> <p>The young person should also contribute to this arrangement from their own income be that from wages or welfare benefits. Carers will not be expected to give money to young people directly</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances, whereby the young person is over the age of 21 years, the Staying Put arrangement would need to be approved by the Children & families Director.</p>
Long Service Payment	<p>A One off payment of £500 to mark each 5 years of caring service will be paid to fostering households fulfilling this criteria. Valid from from 01.04.2016.</p>
MISCELLANEOUS	<p>Any matter of a financial nature that is not covered in the policy or is an "exceptional " matter should be raised with the Supervising social worker who will seek direction from the FPS team leader and or Senior managers of the Directorate.</p>

Expectations on foster carers

All approved and Registered foster carers are required to comply with the legal standards governing approval and registration in order to continue to receive allowances and fees.

**Debbie Brayshaw
Director Children and Families service**