Additional Payments for Coventry City Council Foster Carers
Additional Payments for Foster Carers

Additional payments to Coventry City Council's foster carers in addition to the Maintenance Allowance Structure (2016/17).

All foster carers approved by Coventry City Council receive a weekly fee and an age related maintenance allowance for each of the children/young people in their care. The weekly maintenance allowance is intended to cover the costs associated with caring for a 'Looked After Child'. Maintenance payments are set in line with Fostering Network recommendations and are reviewed annually.

Payment of an age related maintenance allowance is expected to cover the majority of costs arising from the care plan of looked after children. If you receive a payment for holiday, clothing and equipment and the child has left your home or leaves shortly afterwards please discuss this with your SSW and reimburse Coventry City Council so that this money can follow the child. This is done through the Council Website under “pay for it” the overpayment Reference is 045.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of child/young person</th>
<th>Fostering Allowance per child, per week</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>£144.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>£164.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>£204.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+</td>
<td>£248.36</td>
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</tbody>
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An additional 5 weeks of fostering allowances are paid per child per annum to cover the following:

1 x weekly allowance – birthdays
1 x weekly allowance – festivals
2 x weekly allowance - holiday
1 x weekly allowance- clothing (school uniform or similar)

Holidays

The current allowance scheme is expected to cover all costs associated with holidays.

Furniture and equipment

Foster carers are currently provided with furniture and equipment depending on their approval category. Carers are encouraged to identify with their Supervising Social Worker when any of the above items needs replacing. This includes the following items:

- Bed and bedding
- Wardrobe
- Desk
- Chair
- Baby and toddler equipment including stair gate
- Car Seat
- Push chair / pram

Please speak to your supervising social worker for further details of recommendations and limits in regard to these items.

Personal Care

In some instances children may require specialist hair and skin treatments.

Foster carers will be reimbursed for these costs if they are agreed to be significant and have been agreed at the initial placement planning meeting or subsequent team around the child meetings with the foster carers.

The costs of these will be met by the children’s social work team.
Mileage
From 1st July 2016 the first 40 miles per household per week will not be paid, any eligible mileage over that will be paid at 45p per mile. A week will be defined as running between Sunday and Saturday, in line with the fees. A week will be defined as running between Sunday and Saturday, in line with the fees.
List of journeys eligible to be claimed for:

Identity Documents
Funding applications for immigration, passports and birth certificates will be met by Children's Social Work teams and the application process to secure immigration and travel documents should be secured **within 4 weeks of child becoming looked after or as part of initial court processes whichever is sooner.**

Optician and Dentist
Cost of standard lenses and frames are met by NHS – any request for non-standard frames and lenses will need to be made to the Service Manager by the children’s social worker. Costs of non-NHS orthodontic treatment will be met by the children’s social work team.

Additional educational items
These may include the cost of any exam resits, equipment for training or internship and any other specified equipment for school or college.
Any costs under £20 should be considered as part of the maintenance allowance. After this the requirement will need to be discussed with this children’s social worker and the children’s social worker will be responsible for ensuring the claim is processed.

Contact
School Run
Parents Evenings
Meetings
PEPs
Assemblies
Concerts
Health assessments
Opticians
Doctors
Dentist
Structured activities such as Scouts
Training
Therapy / Counselling
LAC Reviews
Meetings
Working Parties
Workshops
Children Coming into Care

When a child first enters the care system there is an assumption that they will not have adequate or appropriate clothing.

There is an automatic entitlement to £100 clothing allowance when a child first comes into care and should be paid by the next payment run. Foster carers are expected to retain receipts which will be provided to their Supervising Social Worker (SSW). This will be paid to the foster carer directly into their accounts by the next payment run.

School Uniform

Foster carers are expected to purchase suitable school uniform from the weekly maintenance allowance. There are exceptional circumstances where additional financial support may be offered to foster carers. Should a carer require to buy another school uniform within the school year as a result of a change of school then the carer will be reimbursed up to a maximum of £100 for primary school and £150 for secondary school.

The foster carer will give appropriate receipts to their Supervising Social Worker. Payment will be made on the next payment run.

School trips

All school trips under £20 will be expected to be met by the carer via the allowance.

School trips up to £300 (per academic year) will be paid by the children’s social work team. If places may be lost the carer may wish to initially pay a deposit, or full amount as required in the knowledge that this will be reimbursed by the children’s social work team.

Trips in excess of £300 will be considered by children’s social work Service Manager based on a written case from the social worker and their Manager. As much notice as possible from the foster carer of this situation is helpful to allow this process to occur.

Timescales for decision making in these instances is paramount. Foster carers will inform the relevant social worker at the earliest opportunity and inform them of the date when a decision needs to be communicated back to them. Any delays should be reported under the escalation policy.
Activities and Hobbies

Enrichment activities have been found to be very useful in building the resilience of looked after children whilst promoting their emotional well-being.

The first £20 of any costs should be considered as part of the maintenance allowance. After this up to £100 can be claimed by carers every financial year to meet the costs of subscriptions for the child, equipment (including specific clothing / uniform) or fees.

The activity will need to be discussed with the children’s social worker and the children’s social worker will be responsible for ensuring the claim is processed. The amounts can be requested at intervals if that is more relevant. Receipts will be required – however as this cost will be standardised the current ‘discretionary’ element is removed.

In cases where the activity / hobbies will cost more than £100 the matter will be considered by children’s social work Service Manager based on a written case from the social worker and their Manager. As above, as much notice as is possible from the foster carer will assist in this process.

For more information call the friendly team on 024 7683 2828
www.coventry.gov.uk/fostering