Tracking expenditure relating to Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments to Children and Young People

Policy in relation to:

**Fostering Regulations 2011**

* Regulation 15 – Health of children placed with foster Carers

**Fostering Services National Minimum Standards (England) 2011:**

* Standard 2.1-2.7- Promoting a positive identity, potential and valuing diversity through individualized care
* Standard 6.1-6.3 - Promoting good health and wellbeing
* Standard 7.1- 7.2– Education, employment and leisure activities
* Standard 10.1- Providing a suitable physical environment for the Foster Child
* Standard 12.1; 12.3- Promoting independence and moves to adulthood and leaving care
* Standard 28.9- Payments to Carers

### Policy and Procedure

This policy and procedure relates to all children and young people currently in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP).

This policy and procedure should be applied retrospectively to all children and young people living with Children Always First Foster Carers prior to the release of this policy and procedure.

Once a child reaches 15 years and 9 months the Foster Carer will need to confirm agreement to being the Benefit Appointee for the Child’s DLA claim and payment. If the Foster Carer is unable to be the Benefit Appointee Children Always First will need to discuss with the Local Authority and agree a way forward.

The Foster Carer will need to confirm agreement to being the Benefit Appointee for the child’s DLA/PIP claim or payment via a standard letter with copy sent to the Local Authority Social Worker (Local Authority Social Worker).

The Foster Carer will need to open a bank account in their name within which the Child’s DLA (or PIP if child is placed post 16th birthday)\* payment (and other future benefits/allowanced) will be paid. A letter from the LA and Children Always First will be required stating that the child in question is in the care of the Children Always First Foster Carer, copies are to be kept on file and sent to the Local Authority Social Worker.

This bank account needs to be separate from the Foster Carer’s own bank account and also separate from any savings accounts opened/held for the child.

\*At 16 years of age a capacity assessment (to be completed by the Local Authority Social Worker with input from Children Always First staff and Foster Carers) should be completed and recorded to evidence decision making associated with the PIP being either paid directly to an account controlled by the young person or the PIP being continued to paid into the Benefit Appointees bank account.

An agreement relating to how DLA/PIP is to be spent should be discussed and agreed with the child’s placing authority. This should be confirmed in writing and a copy sent to all relevant parties.

Tracking of expenditure: All expenditure related to any monies received via DLA; PIP or any other benefit the child receives that are paid to the Benefit Appointees bank account must be accompanied by receipts, which should be kept for the duration of the child’s stay with the Foster Carers. It is expected that the Supervising Social Worker (Supervising Social Worker) will view a copy of the monthly statement linked to the DLA/PIP account. The Supervising Social Worker will record this in the Foster Carers records.

If the decision is made to continue to pay monies received via PIP to the Benefit Appointees bank account due to concerns in regard to the capacity of the young person to manage monies received, then the young person must be consulted in regard to how the monies are being spent. This consultation needs to be evidenced through discussions between the Local Authority Social Worker / Supervising Social Worker and the young person/Foster Carer and recorded appropriately.

Once the child moves on from Foster Care, the Foster Carer and Supervising Social Worker must agree as to what happens to the receipts and the Supervising Social Worker must inform the Local Authority Social Worker.

