



**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CHILDREN'S SERVICES
DEPARTMENT**

**FINANCIAL
HANDBOOK
2020/21**

**FOSTERING ALLOWANCES AND
PAYMENTS**

Effective from 1st April 2020

CONTENTS

1. MAINSTREAM FOSTERING Pg.4
 - 1.1 Weekly Fostering Allowance
 - 1.1.1 Clothing
 - 1.1.2 Personal
 - 1.1.3 Household
 - 1.1.4 Pocket Money and Savings
 - 1.1.5 Transport
 - 1.2 Fostering Skills Allowance
 - 1.3 Family, Friends and Connected People who Foster
 - 1.4 School Transport
 - 1.5 Multiple Placements & Sibling Groups
2. SPECIALIST FOSTERING Pg.10
 - 2.1 Contract Care
 - 2.2 Disability Contract Care
 - 2.3 Link Care
3. ADDITIONAL ALLOWANCES Pg.13
 - 3.1 Birthday Allowance
 - 3.2 Festivity Allowance
 - 3.3 Annual Clothing Allowance
 - 3.4 School Uniform Allowance
 - 3.5 Holiday Allowance
 - 3.5.1 Foreign Holidays with School
 - 3.6 Start-Up Allowance
 - 3.7 Special Allowance
 - 3.7.1 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children
4. FOSTERING EQUIPMENT Pg.17
 - 4.1 Ordering Fostering Equipment
5. SHORT BREAK FOSTERING Pg.18
 - 5.1 Overnight & Daily Rates of Payment
 - 5.2 Support Care Payment
6. ENHANCED CHILDCARE – Support for Foster Carers Who Work Pg.21
 - 6.1 What is Enhanced Childcare?
 - 6.2 Whose responsibility is it to find childcare?
 - 6.3 Can relatives or friends provide childcare?
 - 6.4 Children with challenging behaviours
 - 6.5 Who pays for childcare?
 - 6.6 What happens when childcare arrangements are disrupted?
 - 6.7 Does Enhanced Childcare apply to established foster carers?
7. EMERGENCY PLACEMENTS Pg.25
 - 7.1 Out of Hours payments
8. WHEN CHILDREN ARE ABSENT FROM THE FOSTER HOME Pg.25
 - 8.1 One-off Absences
 - 8.2 Disruptions to Placements
 - 8.3 Children Missing from Foster Care
 - 8.4 Hospital Absences
 - 8.5 Serious Complaints and Allegations
 - 8.6 Leaving the Foster Home
 - 8.7 Hospitality Payments – Hosting Adoptive Parents
9. IT GRANT SCHEME Pg.27
 - 9.1 Computer Allowances
 - 9.2 IT Grants for Young People
10. EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT Pg.28

- 11. TRANSPORT COSTS &
APPROVED MILEAGE Pg.28
 - 11.1 Specified Journeys in Relation to
Child Care Duties
 - 11.2 Specified Journeys in Relation to
Foster Carer Duties
 - 11.3 Claiming Mileage Expenses

- 12. FOSTER CARERS WHO
DELIVER TRAINING Pg.30

- 13. FOSTER CHILDREN AGED 16+
Pg.30
 - 13.1 Further Education Allowance

- 14. SUPPORT FOR CARE
LEAVERS AGED 18-21 Pg.30
 - 14.1 Staying Put
 - 14.2 Care Leavers in Higher Education
 - 14.3 Leaving Care Grants

- 15. ALLOWANCES FOR
CONVERSIONS TO OTHER
ORDERS Pg.32

- 16. PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS
Pg.32

- 17. QUERIES, SUGGESTIONS &
COMPLAINTS REGARDING
FINANCES Pg.33
 - 17.1 Queries Regarding Payments
 - 17.2 Correspondence
 - 17.3 General Queries, Suggestions &
Complaints

Appendix 1 – Allowances and Preferred
Providers Fostering Equipment Pg.34

1 MAINSTREAM FOSTERING

1.1 Mainstream foster carers

All approved foster carers receive a weekly fostering allowance which aims to provide the average family cost of fully maintaining a foster child according to his or her age.

The basic weekly fostering allowance covers the following:

- General maintenance including food, accommodation and related costs. For further information refer to Section 1.1.3
- Normal replacement of clothing. For further information refer to Section 1.1.1
- Pocket money and savings. For further information refer to Section 1.1.4
- Normal transport associated with any child living within a family including to and from a local school. For further information on transport refer to Section 1.1.5 and to Section 1.4 for information on free school transport.
- Routine contact with parents, siblings and relatives.
- Attendance at meetings related to the child. Transport costs can be claimed. Refer to Section 12.
- Involvement in clubs and leisure activities. For further information refer to Section 1.1.2
- Keeping record logs about and for the child/young person.
- Life story work for the child/young person.

Foster carers have flexibility in how much of the allowance is used for each of these areas to acknowledge the specific and differing needs and levels of development of the child/young person fostered by them.

Derbyshire County Council fostering allowances are set above the national minimum levels prescribed by the Government.

Age Range	Weekly Fostering Allowance Payment per Child
0-4	£151.24
5-10	£167.58
11-15	£191.30
16+	£223.95

1.1.1 Clothing

It is **not** expected that a fixed amount is spent every week on clothes, as long as the child/young person is appropriately and adequately clothed. All items must be of the correct size, in good condition and appropriate for child/young person and season.

Foster carers should keep receipts for clothing purchases for six months after the end of the placement. If the child's social worker or supervising social worker is concerned about a child/young person's clothing, they will discuss this with the foster carer and may ask to see a record of purchases and receipts.

Where a child/young person moves on, any clothing that has been purchased for them should move with them.

For any child/young person who comes into care with inadequate clothing, a Start-Up allowance can be claimed to purchase essential clothing items. Full details are in Section 3.6.

An annual clothing allowance is claimable for all Looked After children/young people in full-time care. Full details are in Section 3.3.

Foster carers should take into account the plans for the child/young person to ensure that unrealistic standards are not set for returning home or preparing for adult life, e.g. the purchase of expensive 'designer' clothes.

1.1.2 Personal

Foster carers are expected to cover the cost of the child/young person's personal items such as toiletries, toys and where appropriate, leisure activities and clubs, e.g. swimming, gymnastics, Cubs or Brownies.

1.1.3 Household

The weekly fostering allowance covers extra electricity, gas or other fuel, normal wear and tear on household items, maintenance and redecoration of child/young person's bedroom.

1.1.4 Pocket Money and Savings

Children and young people in care should receive pocket money that is fair and transparent. Foster carers should support children/young people to develop the financial management skills that they need in the future to become responsible adults.

The guidance for pocket money rates (payable from the weekly fostering allowance) and savings are:

Age Range	Total Amount	Recommended Savings from Pocket Money
0 – 1		
2 – 4	3.00	£1
5 – 10	4.00	£2
11 – 12	6.00	£2
13 – 15	9.50	£3
16+	13.00	£4

For further information and helpful toolkits and guidance, please refer to the Children in Care Savings and Pocket Money Policy –

<http://derbyshirecaya.proceduresonline.com/chapters/contents.html>

1.1.5 Transport

The basic fostering allowance includes an element for travelling costs, which are part of the normal pattern of expenditure incurred in looking after foster children.

Examples of travel which the foster carer would be expected to absorb within the fostering allowance would include:

- Normal trips for medical appointments if local to the foster carer's home.
- Transport to and from school where the school is less than 2 miles from the foster home for under 8 year olds, and less than 3 miles from the foster home for over 8 years old. See Section 1.4 for details on how to apply for free school transport for children attending schools over this mileage. Further information on transport is also available in Section 12.

1.2 Fostering Skills Allowance

The Fostering Skills Allowance (FSA) is paid weekly to eligible fostering households in addition to fostering allowances (Section 1.1) and any additional allowances as set out in this document. There are five FSA Bands which are:

Skills Band	Weekly Payment per Household
Foundation	No FSA payment
Band A	£15.60
Band B	£21.84
Band C	£36.40
Band D	£104.00

The FSA payment is per household, not per child, therefore this payment will be the same regardless of the number of placements.

Foster carers must produce and maintain a portfolio at Annual Reviews to evidence that they have met the criteria of the FSA Band that they choose to foster at.

Do speak with your supervising social worker if you wish to know more. Foster carers who are **available** and awaiting a new foster child will be paid a retention payment when a placement ends at 50% of the Fostering Skills Allowance payment in between placements for a period of up to 12 weeks.

The Placements Finance Team will generate this payment automatically when they are notified that a placement has ended. If a foster carer is not available for placements, supervising social workers will notify the Placements Finance Team so that retention payments are not made.

Foster carers who provide Short Break care only, will not receive this retention payment. They will be paid an Activity and Retention allowance for this scheme. Please refer to Section 4 for further information.

1.3 Family and Friends or Others Connected to the Child who Foster

For some children, the most appropriate people to be their foster carers are relatives, family friends, teachers or other adults with close connections to them. They can be approved as specific foster carers for named children, and receive the same level of financial and other support as foster carers who have no existing relationship with the child/young person.

Where necessary, emergency approval of a child's relatives or family friends under Fostering Regulation 24 may be given for a maximum 16 weeks, by which time a report has to be presented to panel for the applicants to be considered for approval as connected carers.

Nb There is some variation to Regulation 24 as described in the Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 which provides for flexibilities to be applied to the regulations during the current COVID-19 period until the 25th September when these amendments will lapse.

Foster carers who care for a child/young person in these circumstances will receive the same fostering allowances set out in this document. The only variation to this being:

- Up to 1 weeks Holiday allowance can be paid prior to approval as foster carers, with the remaining 2 weeks Holiday allowance payable post-approval.
- Connected Carers can apply for Derbyshire leisure passes through their supervising social worker. They will be able to use them for 6 months and then if they are approved longer term they will be issued with another one.
- Once approved, Connected Carers are entitled to the IT grant in Section 11.

Information for Fostering Workers :

If additional clothing is needed for the child/young person pre-approval, this will be paid from the relevant Locality budget.

1.4 School Transport

The following guidance is taken from the Derbyshire County Council Transport Policy for Children and Young People September 2016.

Where possible and appropriate, the child/young person should travel to school independently by walking or cycling, on public or other school transport. For younger children or where other forms of transport are not available, it is expected that where possible and appropriate the foster carer or other carer will transport the child to school. Travelling in a taxi or Council transport can be a very isolating experience for a child/young person and significantly impact on their well-being and relationships with peers and family. For journeys above 3 miles, those do not qualify for home to school transport funding, carers will be reimbursed at the rate of 45p per mile (See Section 13).

The Derbyshire County Council home-to-school transport scheme provides help with transport for full time infant, junior and secondary school pupils to the end of statutory school age who do not live within walking distance of their normal area school.

This distance, as defined in the Education Act 1996, is two miles for children under eight and three miles for children over eight and is measured by the shortest available route.

For secondary school pupils to the end of statutory school age, the distance is three miles to their normal area school. Distances are measured by the shortest available route.

For looked after children and young people who do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan and who have an assessed need to attend school outside of the normal area where they live, decisions regarding transport will be taken in the best interests of the child by their social worker.

This decision should be made either at the initial care planning meeting or the statutory review. For those eligible for home to school funding, the carer will be reimbursed at the rate of 45p per mile based on two return journeys a day by the Council's Education department. If the foster carer is going on to work or some other private arrangement and thus not incurring a return journey, the single journey will be reimbursed.

Further information on home to school transport assistance and the Transport Policy for Children and Young People is available on the Derbyshire County Council website under Education and Learning. The application form can be accessed at: <https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/education/schools/your-child-at-school/travel/school-transport.aspx>

As individual circumstances cannot be taken into account on initial application, the first application may be declined and the child's social worker may need to appeal, setting out the reasons for the child/young person's need to attend a school outside their normal area school.

1.5 Multiple Placements

In most circumstances, placing brothers and sisters together means that they can be cared for and grow up as a family group.

Fostering regulations allow up to 3 children who are not siblings to be placed together in a single foster home – this is known as *the usual fostering limit*. Some carers are willing and able to provide for more children; however, this is only permissible with the specific approval of the Agency Decision Maker, usually with consideration by the fostering panel that has granted an exemption to the usual fostering limit (EUFL).

Caring for 3 or more foster children leads to extra financial and practical challenges; and this is recognised through a Multiple Placement payment as shown in the table below:

Number of Looked after Children	Amount
3	£25 per child per week
4 or more	£40 per child per week

This payment is made for all full-time task focused placements. It is NOT payable for short break placements as this is reflected through Activity and Retention Allowance payments, which are paid for each child/young person in placement (Section 5).

2 SPECIALIST FOSTERING

Specialist fostering schemes are designed for children and young people who have additional needs as detailed in the following sections:

2.1 Contract Care

The Contract Care scheme provides a family-based alternative for young people who have more complex needs and would otherwise be placed in residential or specialist agency placements.

For those foster carers who meet the required criteria following initial assessment and training, the basic fostering allowances detailed in Section 1.1 and an additional fee of £493.15 per week are payable.

Two payments of £150 are made annually to the contract carer household as a Reflective Practice Allowance. The payments are based on 50% attendance of the reflective practice sessions available. Contract carers are supported by the Contract Care Team.

Full terms and conditions of this scheme are available separately from the Contract Care Team.

Contract Care for Disabled Children

The Disability Contract Care scheme provides long term care or regular short breaks for children/young people with severe disabilities who would otherwise be placed in a residential or specialist agency placements.

For full-time disability contract carers who meet the required criteria following initial assessment and training, the basic fostering allowances detailed in Section 1.1 and an additional fee of £493.15 per week are payable.

Approved short break disability contract carers will be paid a Short-Break Contract Care (Disabled Children) fee of £96.69 (or the rate as at 1st April) per day, including the day the child arrives and leaves. This is based on the weekly full-time Contract Care fee divided by 5 days, (which equates to a usual full week of care for a disability short-break contract carer) and will be paid only when a child or young person is placed with the carer/s under the terms of this scheme. In addition to the fee, fostering allowances (Short-Break Contract Care (Disabled Children) Allowances) at the appropriate Derbyshire rates and conditions, are payable, commencing on the first day of placement

Two payments of £150 are made annually to the contract carer household as a Reflective Practice Allowance. The payments are based on 50% attendance of the reflective practice sessions available. Disability Contract Carers are supported by the Disability Fostering Team.

Full terms and conditions of this scheme are available separately from the Disability Contract Care Team.

2.2 Link Care

The Link Care scheme provides short breaks for children/young people who have disabilities. Unlike other fostering schemes, these children/young people are not usually looked after by Derbyshire Children's Services Department, but live at home with their families.

The allowances were reviewed during 19/20 including consultation with foster carers and slightly increased as a consequence.

The payment is made up of an allowance which is based on mainstream fostering allowances broken down into sessional rates (1/7 of the weekly rate), a proportion of Disability Living Allowance rate and an Activity and Retention fee, which recognises the additional activities that carers who look after children/young people for a short break often undertake and the additional expenses in providing activities for disabled children. The retention element of this payment is paid for each child/young person every time the Link Carer provides a short break; rewarding carers for the more short breaks provided.

The Link Care payment includes:

- Food, accommodation and related costs.

- Normal transport associated with any child living within a family.
- Leisure and activity costs, including travel to and from these activities.
- Toys and games which are not brought from the home.

A part day rate is paid for stays of less than 5 hours.

A full day rate is paid for stays of 5 hours or more, but not overnight.

For overnight stays, payment will be made from the date the child/young person arrives to the date the child/young person leaves. Payments will be made at the weekly rate in the table below, calculated on a pro-rata basis.

In addition to the rates in the table below, eligible foster carers will also be paid the relevant Fostering Skills Allowance on a pro-rata basis for the length of stay, based on the skills band that the foster carer is on. This payment is made per household, so those foster carers who have more than one child/young person will receive one skills allowance payment per week, regardless of how many children they have in placement.

Placements for children who have been assessed to have additional health care needs will be paid at the Additional Healthcare Needs rate regardless of the age of the child/young person.

Age Range	Weekly Rate	Full Day Rate (5 hours or more)	Part Day Rate (less than 5 hours)
0-10	£403.73	£30.62	£20.41
11+	£427.45	£33.16	£22.10
Additional Healthcare Needs	£460.10	£36.62	£24.43

**Revised rates based on weekly allowance with inflationary increase 2020/21 plus £29.05 ARA payment plus higher rate DLA at 2020/21 rates*

The length of the short break placement will be agreed in advance by the social worker at the Resource Allocation meeting. At matching visits, the following should be agreed:

- The activities which will be undertaken.
- The travel arrangements for collecting and dropping off the child/young person.
- How any activity costs will be funded.
- Provision of clothes, toys, pads, nappies, toiletries etc.

More costly activities or provisions that are considered to be in the child/young person's best interest may be discussed and funding agreed with the child's social worker and supervising social worker through Special Allowances (Section 3.7).

Information for Fostering Workers:

CA4 forms should be completed by the foster carers' supervising social worker as soon as the link care placement ends, with the date the child/young person arrived and the date that they left.

If the break was for a part day or full day placement, the relevant box should be ticked.

The completed form should then be sent to cs.pft@derbyshire.gov.uk, to enable the payments to be made promptly.

3 ADDITIONAL ALLOWANCES

Additional allowances provide for one-off expenses not covered in Mainstream allowances and Specialist schemes. They fall into three categories; those payable automatically, those claimable by foster carers and those that can be approved in special circumstances.

Age Range	Birthday, Festivity, Clothing, Uniform Allowance
0-4	£121.50
5-10	£134.60
11-15	£153.65
16+	£179.88

3.1 Birthday Allowance

The birthday allowance is payable annually. The age related rate in the table above (Section 3) will be paid automatically prior to the child/young person's birthday:

18th Birthday Allowance – £359.76 (2 x 16+ rate above – Section 3) will be paid automatically prior to the young person's 18th birthday.

3.2 Festivity Allowance

The festivity allowance is paid for each child/young person who will be living with foster carers on 25th December. The age related rate in the table above (Section 3) will be paid automatically in the first week in December.

If the child/young person follows a different faith and prefers to celebrate a different festival, the Placements Finance Team should be notified by mid-November by the supervising social worker so that other arrangements can be made.

3.3 Annual Clothing Allowance

The age related rate detailed in the table (Section 3) is **claimable** annually by the foster carer. If preferred, this allowance may be claimed in two six-monthly instalments following the child/young person's admission into care. All items must be of the correct size, in good condition and appropriate for child/young person, and receipts kept for all clothing purchased for the child/young person. Refer to Section 1.1.1 Clothing for further details.

Derbyshire County Council approved foster carers can claim this allowance by completing the online form on the Derbyshire County Council website and selecting: Menu

- Children and Family Services
 - Adoption and Fostering
 - Support and resources for approved foster carers
 - Fostering, benefits, allowances and Resources
- OR by selecting the following link

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/children-and-families/foster/fostering/approved-foster-carers/fees-benefits/annual-clothing-allowance/annual-clothing-allowance.aspx>

OR by requesting a form from the Placements Finance Team or supervising social worker.

3.4 School Uniform Allowance

The age related allowance detailed in the table (Section 3) is **claimable** by carers **at the time that a child/young person enters school or transfers to a new school only**.

This allowance is to assist towards the purchase of a school outfit for a child entering or transferring schools where school uniforms are required. All other replacement costs are expected to be met through the clothing element contained within the fostering allowance. The same applies to sports equipment and sports clothing.

All items must be of the correct size, in good condition and appropriate for child/young person, and receipts kept for all uniform purchased. Refer to Section 1.1.1 Clothing for further details.

Derbyshire County Council approved foster carers can claim this allowance by completing the online form on the Derbyshire County Council website and selecting: Menu

- Children and Family Services
- Adoption and Fostering
- Support and resources for approved foster carers
- Fostering, benefits, allowances and Resources

OR by selecting the following link

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/children-and-families/foster/fostering/approved-foster-carers/fees-benefits/fostering-benefits-allowances-and-resources.aspx>

OR by requesting a form from the Placements Finance Team or supervising social worker.

3.5 Holiday Allowance

Up to 3 weeks age rate detailed in the table above (Section 3) is **claimable** annually for a child/young person accompanying his/her carer on a holiday or trip, or for school holidays and trips. This may also be claimed for stay at home holidays by carers who choose to have outings rather than a holiday away from home. Alternatively, two weeks holiday and one weeks stay at home allowance or vice versa may be claimed. In line with schools' expectations of parents generally and the aim of enabling children in care to achieve as well as possible educationally, carers of school aged foster children are expected to take their holidays during school holidays.

Derbyshire County Council approved foster carers can claim this allowance by completing the online form on the Derbyshire County Council website and selecting: Menu

- Children and Family Services
 - Adoption and Fostering
 - Support and resources for approved foster carers
 - Fostering, benefits, allowances and Resources
- OR by selecting the following link

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/children-and-families/foster/fostering/approved-foster-carers/fees-benefits/fostering-benefits-allowances-and-resources.aspx>

OR by requesting a form from the Placements Finance Team or supervising social worker.

3.5.1 Foreign Holidays with School

Written requests for foreign holidays with school must be made via the child's social worker well in advance to enable the necessary consideration. Supported requests should then be forwarded to the Placements Finance Team on Special Allowances Claims form for the payment to be processed.

3.6 Start-Up Allowance

This allowance is only for children who are looked after by Derbyshire County Council mainstream foster carers, it is not available to short break carers, Aftercare placements, Children's Homes or Independent Fostering Agencies.

This allowance is also sometimes referred to as the Emergency or Initial Clothing allowance. This allowance can be claimed if a child/young person does not have adequate clothing when coming into care. Payments should be paid in three equal instalments up to the maximum amount shown below, dependant on the need of the child/young person.

Payment 1 – On being admitted into care

Payment 2 – 2 weeks later

Payment 3 – 3 months later

Only in exceptional circumstances, can the 3 instalments be split differently, and only with the agreement of the fostering team manager in writing. This is to prevent situations where repayments have to be made by the foster carer due to children/young people moving placements or back home when the allowance has been paid, but not fully spent by the carer.

When the required level and standard of clothing has been purchased, ongoing clothing costs are covered within the weekly fostering allowances from the date of placement.

Age Range	Amount	Payable in 3 Equal Instalments of:
0-4	£105.00	£35.00
5-10	£120.00	£40.00
11-15	£135.00	£45.00
16+	£150.00	£50.00

Information for Fostering Workers :

Where a child/young person comes into care without adequate clothing, form ECA/V1 will be completed by the child/young person's social worker. This form must be approved by either a Fostering or Children's Team Manager. The completed form is then sent onto Placements Finance Team who will process the payment.

3.7 Special Allowances

Special allowances are **claimable** in respect of additional expenditure incurred by foster carers that is not provided for in other allowances.

Examples of special allowances are:

- Compensation for damage or exceptional wear and tear, to vehicles or the carers home or property which cannot be covered from their insurance
- Special dietary requirements of a child/young person

- Additional costs associated with a child/young person's specific health needs, such as replacement spectacles, specialist hair or skincare products
- Additional books or equipment needed for school
- Specialist clothing needs
- Materials for life story or family finding work, such as professional photographs
- Activities not covered under other allowances, but considered to be in child/young person's best interests – horse riding, swimming lessons, music, soft play centres for children with behavioural challenges

Special allowance payments should be agreed in discussion with the Child's Social Worker and Supervising Social Worker and are intended for one-off specific children/events only. It is not expected that these payments become regular and ongoing for all placements once agreed.

3.7.1 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

Consideration of the needs of these children/young people should be treated in the same way as all other looked after children.

Where there are exceptional circumstances that are not covered in mainstream fostering allowances, such as having to travel long distances to specialist food providers to cater to their dietary needs, having to purchase special products for hair and skincare, foster carers can claim special allowances.

Derbyshire County Council approved foster carers can claim this allowance by completing the online form on the Derbyshire County Council website and selecting these options: Menu

- Children and Family Services
 - Adoption and Fostering
 - Support and resources for approved foster carers
 - Fostering, benefits, allowances and Resources
- OR by selecting the following link

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/children-and-families/foster/fostering/approved-foster-carers/fees-benefits/fostering-benefits-allowances-and-resources.aspx>

OR by requesting a form from the Placements Finance Team or supervising social worker.

4 FOSTERING EQUIPMENT

4.1 Ordering Fostering Equipment

Please check with central fostering team at County Hall by emailing any of the team below with your equipment requests – cots, prams, highchairs, stair gates, car seats, baby monitors etc. There is so much preloved equipment within fostering households and sharing this, makes not only great financial

sense but is also environmentally resourceful. Always try to get preloved through this process before purchasing new. Equipment will only be reused if in safe and excellent condition.

Your needs should be discussed and agreed with your Supervising Social Worker.

The Derbyshire County Council Purchasing and Procurement Policy should be followed when purchasing new fostering equipment.

Details on allowances for fostering equipment, with preferred providers is included as Appendix 1 on page 32 at the back of this handbook.

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5 SHORT BREAK FOSTERING

Achieving stability of foster home for all children in care is one of the primary objectives of the fostering service, and providing support for foster carers is part of this.

It is recognised that in order to achieve this, there will be circumstances where foster carers and/or children/young people may need a short break in order to maintain healthy relationships and stability of the fostering home.

There is no automatic entitlement for full time foster carers to continue to receive allowances whilst the child/young person is placed on a short break if this is more than 14 days over a financial year (i.e. April to March). Each situation and case will be considered depending on the needs of the fostered child and the foster carers.

The Short Break scheme enables full time foster carers and the children/young people who live with them to have a short break away in order to maintain a positive fostering home.

Short breaks may be required for various reasons:

- Due to the exceptional needs of the child/young person and the need for foster carers to recharge their batteries
- Due to short term health issues or other family crises
- Other reasons that must form part of the child's care plan
- Events where it would be inappropriate or not possible to take the child/young person with the carer, such as training courses, hospital appointments or attending family funerals where there are no alternative care arrangements.

Full time foster carers are expected to send ample and adequate clothing for the time the young person is going on the short break. Full time foster carers should provide pocket money and pay in advance for any regular lessons, as this is not included in short break payments.

The supervising social worker is authorised to agree full payment of allowances and skills payment (during short breaks) of up to 14 days in a financial year (April to March).

Should additional short breaks be needed, beyond 14 days, this can be agreed and authorised by the Operational Manager for Fostering. The short break foster carer ONLY will be paid for this additional time. The full time carer will not receive any fostering allowances but will continue to receive Fostering Skills allowance payments in order to put a reasonable limit on 'double payments' to two carers for the same child/ren.

Supervising social workers will be expected to monitor and record how many periods of short break support each foster carer has had and ensure that planning for the short break covers the necessary details.

5.1 Overnight and Daily Rates of Payment for Short Breaks

The scheme was reviewed in 2019/20 and slightly increased. The aim is to be equitable and meet the costs for Short Break Carers for the fostering that they do.

The payment is made up of an allowance which is based on mainstream fostering allowances broken down into sessional rates (1/7 of the weekly fostering allowance), and an Activity and Retention fee, (£4.15 per day) which recognises the additional activities that carers who look after children/young people for a short break often undertake. The retention element of this payment is paid for each child/young person every time the Short Break Carer provides a placement; rewarding carers for the more short breaks provided.

The Short Break payment includes:

- Food, accommodation and related costs of caring for a child.
- Normal transport associated with any child living within a family.
- Leisure and activity costs, including travel to and from these activities.
- Toys and games which are not brought from the home.

A part day rate is paid for stays of less than 5 hours.

A full day rate is paid for stays of 5 hours or more, but not overnight.

For overnight stays, payment will be made from the date the child/young person arrives to the date the child/young person leaves. Payments will be made at the weekly rate in the table (on page 20), calculated on a pro-rata basis.

In addition to the rates (on page 20), eligible foster carers will also be paid the relevant Fostering Skills Allowance on a pro-rata basis for the length of stay, based on the skills band that the foster carer is on. This payment is made per household, so those foster carers who have more than one child/young person will receive one skills allowance payment per week, regardless of how many children they have in placement.

Age Range	Weekly Rate	Full Day Rate (5 hours or more)	Part Day Rate (less than 5 hours)
0-4	£158.38	£16.96	£11.31
5-10	£172.34	£18.46	£12.31
11-15	£192.62	£20.63	£13.76
16+	£220.53	£23.62	£15.75

*Revised rates based on weekly allowance with inflationary increase 2018/19 and £29.05 weekly (£4.15 daily) ARA payment
 More costly activities or provisions that are considered to be in the child/young person's best interest may be discussed and funding agreed with the child's social worker and supervising social worker through Special Allowances (Section 3.7).

Information for Fostering Workers:

CA4 forms should be completed by the foster carers supervising social worker as soon as the short break placement ends, with the date the child/young person arrived and the date that they left.

If the break was for a part day or full day placement, the relevant box should be ticked.

The completed form should then be sent to cs.pft@derbyshire.gov.uk, to enable the payments to be made promptly.

5.2 Support Carer Payment

It is recognised that children/young people may have established relationships with wider foster family members or close friends of the foster family. Where relatives or close friends of the main foster carers offer to provide childcare for up to 14 days planned short breaks, a support care payment will be made to the carers who will pay the relative/close friend for the child care. Should additional short breaks be needed, beyond 14 days, this can be agreed and authorised by the Operation's Manager for Fostering. The relative/close friend ONLY will be paid for this additional time. Payments will be made through the child's foster carer who will then pay their family member/friend.

This payment will appear on Remittance Slips as Enhanced Childcare. Any arrangement of this kind must be agreed in discussion with the child's social worker and supervising social worker. The supervising social worker will carry out DBS checks and a basic assessment on the relative/close friend, which is authorised by the Head of Service/ADM.

Information for Fostering Workers:

A **Support Carer Assessment (FS33)** form must be completed and a copy of the completed form uploaded onto Mosaic by the supervising social worker.

6 ENHANCED CHILDCARE - SUPPORT FOR FOSTER CARERS WHO WORK

6.1 What is Enhanced Childcare?

The Enhanced Childcare for foster carers' scheme is to enable foster carers who have some work commitments but still wish to foster, to be assessed to see if their work commitments are compatible with their fostering role; and if approved, the provision of childcare to enable them to do this. This scheme is **NOT** to be used for short breaks, planned or otherwise (Section 5). The assessment will either be undertaken as part of the foster carer's initial assessment by the fostering recruitment social worker or, following approval, by the carers' supervising social worker.

It may also be relevant for Family and Friends/Connected Carers and should be considered at the time of placement.

Where relevant – Foster carers can access the government 30 hours free childcare for foster children scheme. In order to be eligible to apply for the 30 hours extended entitlement you and your partner (if you have one) must be working outside of your role as a foster carer and be able to evidence this with pay slips, etc. and the offer must be consistent with the child's care plan. Information is available from the ECS Administrator, John Hadfield House, Room 143, Dale Road, MATLOCK, DE4 3RD or email enquiries.30hours@derbyshire.gov.uk

Information for Fostering Workers:

The social worker will assess before school, after school and school holiday childcare needs, and complete a **Foster Carer Enhanced Childcare Assessment (FS30)** which will be uploaded onto Mosaic by either the assessing or supervising social worker.

The social worker will also complete an **Enhanced Childcare Contract (FS31)** which will outline the responsibilities of the foster carers and Children's Services.

This will be uploaded onto Mosaic by either the assessing or supervising social worker.

Forms for the government 30 hours free childcare for foster children scheme are available on procedures on-line, TriX, documents library.

6.2 Whose Responsibility to Find Childcare?

In the first instance, it is the foster carer's responsibility to make childcare arrangements with approved childcare providers (e.g. registered childminders, after-school clubs etc.) Approved childcare providers will send their invoices to the Fostering Locality office and it will be paid out of the fostering budget.

Use of other foster carers to provide on-going childcare will only be used as a last resort or for children with the most specific needs. If a foster carer has an arrangement with another foster carer that works for them, then this can continue. **Where foster carers have reciprocal arrangements the department will not make any fostering payments.** Where there are two carers within the household they are asked to minimise the amount of childcare needed by taking annual leave at different times where possible. Foster carers should not change their work commitments without discussing this with their supervising social worker if it has an impact on the childcare they will need. The Finding Childcare Guide also provides information about the Community Childminding Scheme which can be accessed either via the child's social worker or the carer's supervising social worker.

There may be a need in the first few days of a placement, which has been made in an unplanned or emergency basis, for some childcare to be provided in the short term whilst the carer arranges their childcare. It is important that carers do NOT have to alter work arrangements if possible.

6.3 Can Relatives/Friends Provide Childcare?

Close friends and family can only provide childcare for up to 2 hours per day for children under 8 years old, otherwise they will be in breach of childminding regulations. There are no such limits to children over the age of 8 years old.

Information for Fostering Workers:

If a foster carer puts forward a family member or close friend to provide childcare, the assessing social worker or supervising social worker will carry out DBS checks on the relative/friend and include this in the Assessment Report for panel and in the **Enhanced Childcare Assessment (FS30)**.

6.4 Children with Challenging Behaviours

Child minders now offer a range of expertise for children up to the age of 16 including children with specific needs; carers are to be supported in contacting the Families Information Service who will advise them if they are having trouble finding childcare. Further information can be found by clicking the following link:

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/education/early-years-childcare/family-information/family-information-service.aspx>

There will be some children/young people who, because of the risk they pose to other children or because of extreme behavioural difficulties, will need more careful consideration between the child's and carer's social workers and these carers may need to have childcare support provided by other foster carers.

6.5 Who Pays for Childcare?

The payment for Enhanced Childcare will come from each Fostering locality budget.

Information for Fostering Workers:

A Summary of Enhanced Childcare Provision for Looked After Children (FS32) should be completed for every term and/or half term breaks by the foster carer and supervising social worker and **MUST** include start and end/review dates as these vary from school to school. The FS32 forms **MUST** be fully completed and accurate for financial audit purposes. If this is not done they will be returned which will cause delays in payments to foster carers. All FS32 forms should be signed by the foster carer, the supervising social worker and the childcare provider. Copies of the completed FS32 form should be retained by the foster carer and the childcare provider and uploaded onto Mosaic.

If childminding hours vary, this cannot be set up as a regular payment. Please discuss these cases with the Placements Finance Team to seek advice.

If nurseries/child minders send invoices directly to the Local Authority, it is not necessary to complete an FS32.

The completed form should be sent to Placements Finance Team to generate payments

6.6 What Happens When Childcare Arrangements Are Disrupted?

There will be occasions when Enhanced Childcare Arrangements are disrupted. It is important to try to minimise the amount of work time lost by the foster carer on these occasions. If a child/young person has particular behavioural problems that make it difficult for them to remain in mainstream

childcare provision, the Community Childminding Service would be the most appropriate way forward.

6.7 Does the Enhanced Childcare Scheme Apply to Established Foster Carers?

Yes. The supervising social worker must still complete forms FS30, FS31 and FS32 to trigger payments.

Enhanced Childcare Rates

Age Range	Part Day
0-4	£11.31
5-10	£12.31
11-15	£13.76
16+	£15.75

Age Range	Full Day/Night
0-4	£16.96
5-10	£18.46
11-15	£20.63
16+	£23.62

EMERGENCY PLACEMENTS

7.1 Out of Hours Payments

For placements that are made by the Emergency Duty Team out of normal office hours, (Monday to Friday 5pm to 9am and Saturdays and Sundays) a one-off Out of Hours payment will be made for each placement as follows:

For 1 child - £50

For 2 children - £75

For 3 or more children - £100

This payment is made to acknowledge and recompense the disruption and challenges faced by foster carers who take children at short notice in an emergency situation, usually arriving without any clothing or possessions.

Information for Fostering Workers only:

A **CA5** form must be completed and a copy of the completed form uploaded onto Mosaic by the supervising social worker. The completed form should be sent to Placements Finance Team to generate payments.

8. WHEN CHILDREN ARE ABSENT FROM THE FOSTER HOME

8.1 One-Off Absences

Where an occasional night is spent away from the foster home, the foster carer will continue to receive the full allowances and skills payment.

For example

- Overnight contact with parents
- School trips
- Overnight visits to friends

8.2 Disruptions to placements (other than complaints or allegations)

Where a placement disrupts and a foster child is temporarily accommodated elsewhere, the foster carer will continue to receive the full allowances, and skills payment payable up to a maximum of 14 nights, during which time the situation should be resolved.

8.3 Children missing from foster care

Where a child is missing, the foster carer will continue to receive the full allowances and Fostering Skills Allowance payment up to a maximum of 14 nights, during which time a decision regarding retaining or terminating the placement should be taken. For periods that exceed 14 nights, funding will be considered between with the foster carer, the supervising social worker, the child's social worker and the child's social worker's manager.

8.4 Hospital absences

- Full allowances and skills payment are payable for up to 4 weeks in recognition of the costs of supporting the child in hospital
- For absences of over 4 weeks, only clothing and transport elements are payable.

8.5 Serious complaints and allegations

Where a child is removed from a placement following a serious complaint or allegation against a foster carer or a member of the foster carer's household, and until such time as the matter has been investigated and reported to a fostering panel:

- Allowances and skills payment are payable until a decision following a recommendation by the panel, or a maximum of 28 days, whichever is the shorter
- In exceptional circumstances where a panel has been unable fully to consider the matter within this timescale, the Head of Service may decide that payments continue for a further fixed period of time.

8.6 Leaving the foster home

When a child leaves a placement, allowances will be payable up to the end of that payment week.

8.7 Hospitality payments

An allowance of £50 is available to foster carers who are providing hospitality to adopters/special guardians in their own home as part of the introduction process. The introduction process is when adopters/special guardians spend time in the foster carers' home becoming familiar with the child's routine and building a relationship with the child immediately prior to them moving on to live with the adopters/special guardians. This allowance covers the cost of foster carers providing meals and refreshments to adopters/special guardians within the home. This allowance can be claimed via your supervising social worker emailing the Placements Finance Team.

9. IT GRANT SCHEME FOR FOSTER FAMILIES

Please note that this scheme is available to Derbyshire County Council approved foster carers only.

Foster carers are entitled to a £350 grant to purchase IT equipment which is most suitable for the whole family.

Foster carers who look after a disabled child who would benefit from additional IT equipment or software are entitled to a £400 grant.

Foster carers are entitled to a renewal of the Fostering IT grant every 4 years, and will be contacted when the grant is due for renewal. Carers are expected to sign the **IT Acceptable Use Policy** which details how IT equipment should be used. Receipts for purchases will be recorded.

All receipts must be kept and a copy must be sent to Clare Robinson by email or post at the address below within 28 days of receiving the grant, this is to comply with audit and financial regulations.

Applications for the grant are made through Clare Robinson and the Acceptable Use Policy can also be found on the fostering website www.derbyshire.gov.uk/fostering this must be read in full, the terms and conditions agreed and submitted with the grant application form.

For queries relating to IT Grant applications and renewals, the Acceptable Use Policy and IT advice, please contact:

Clare Robinson, Business Services Assistant, Children's Services, DCC,
County Hall, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 3AG.
Telephone 01629 538427
Email clare.robinson2@derbyshire.gov.uk

Please note this IT equipment belongs to the Foster Carer not the child/young person in placement. Should you require a grant for IT equipment for the child/young person please see section 9.2

9.1 Computer Allowances

All Derbyshire County Council approved foster carers receive a monthly payment of £10.00 as a contribution towards IT consumables such as costs of internet provision, ink and paper.

Where foster carers are on hold and not currently taking placements at their own request, the Computer Allowance will stop after 2 months.

Information for Fostering Workers:

The relevant fostering manager should email cs.pft@derbyshire.gov.uk and copy to Clare Robinson to notify them when foster carers are voluntarily on hold, to ensure that Computer Allowance payments cease after 2 months.

9.2 Virtual School IT Grants for Children and Young People in Care

Children and young people in Care may also be entitled to a £350 grant to purchase IT equipment to support their education. This application needs to be made through the Education Support Officers (ESO) in the Virtual School. Contact the child/young person's ESO or email virtual.school@derbyshire.gov.uk

The Acceptable Use Policy can be found on the fostering website www.derbyshire.gov.uk/fostering this must be read in full, the terms and conditions agreed and a signed copy sent to Clare Robinson who can issue the grant to the child/young person carer to support the appropriate IT equipment purchase.

All receipts must be kept and a copy must be sent to Clare Robinson by email or post at the address below within 28 days of receiving the grant, this is to comply with audit and financial regulations.

For queries relating to the grant applications, the Acceptable Use Policy and any IT advice, please contact:

Clare Robinson, Business Services Assistant, Children's Services, DCC,
County Hall, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 3AG.
Telephone 01629 538427
Email clare.robinson2@derbyshire.gov.uk

10. EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

Applications for exceptional financial assistance for educational activities for Looked After Children can be made via the foster carers' supervising social worker such as school foreign holidays.

11. TRANSPORT COSTS & APPROVED MILEAGE ALLOWANCES

Mainstream allowances include an element intended to cover routine transport and travel costs. See Section 1.1.5. In addition to this, carers may claim expenses for specified journeys they undertake as part of their role as fostering duties and tasks.

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/children-and-families/foster/fostering/approved-foster-carers/fees-benefits/fostering-benefits-allowances-and-resources.aspx>

11.1 Specified journeys in relation to the foster child's

- **Child meeting** - attending a review, case conference or planning meeting about a foster child
- **Contact/family time** - transporting a foster child to see their family members
- **Appointment** - transporting a foster child for an appointment except local GP visits, for example to see a specialist health professional / hospital visit, to attend court / see a solicitor or a children's guardian
- **School** - journeys to school are payable ***only in certain circumstances agreed by the foster child's social worker***. See Section 1.4 for further information
- **Other (child)** - other journeys as agreed with the foster child's social worker

11.2 Specified journeys in relation to foster carer duties

- **Training** - attending training events
- **Carer meeting** - attending foster carer panels
- **Support** - for example, assisting with recruitment, training or similar activities, attending countywide meetings of foster carer representatives
- **Other (carer)** - other journeys as agreed with your fostering social worker

11.3 Claiming mileage expenses

Mileage claims should be completed and submitted on a monthly basis.

Carers can claim this allowance by completing the online form on Derbyshire County Councils web site.

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/children-and-families/foster/fostering/approved-foster-carers/fees-benefits/fostering-benefits-allowances-and-resources.aspx>

Or by requesting a form from Placements Finance Team or your worker.

All journeys undertaken should follow the shortest route for the journey and may be subject to checks using an AA route planner / equivalent. If during such checks a journey exceeds the shortest route, carers may be asked to account for the difference by their supervising social worker.

Mileage is paid in line with HMRC rates which are 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles and 25p per mile for each subsequent mile within a tax year. Rate effective from April 2012

12. FOSTER CARERS WHO DELIVER TRAINING

Foster carers who are asked to co-facilitate, plan or deliver training are paid £15 per hour.

Facilitators will be asked to complete a claims form and fully completed forms should be authorised by Jayne Bacon, Service Support Manager or Kathryn Thompson, Fostering Recruitment Team Manager. Authorised forms should be emailed to Placements Finance Team at cs.pft@derbyshire.gov.uk to generate payments.

13. FOSTER CHILDREN AGED 16-17

From the age of 16, pathway planning begins instead of care planning. Payments are made in accordance with mainstream allowances.

Specialist fostering scheme amounts are payable only up to the young person's 18th birthday.

14 SUPPORT FOR CARE LEAVERS AGED 18-21

14.1 Staying Put

Young people aged 18+ are no longer in care. Young people who continue to live with their former foster carers after 18 can do so but as a staying put arrangement. The transition from fostering payments to staying put payments needs to be discussed with the supervising social worker at least six months prior to the young person reaching 18. The supervising social worker will contact the Staying Put Co-ordinator, within Derbyshire's Care Leaver Service for advice on what can be complicated financial arrangements.

More information is available on the Derbyshire County Council website, especially the Local Offer at:

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/site-elements/documents/pdf/social-health/children-and-families/children-we-look-after/the-local-offer-for-derbyshire-care-leavers.pdf>

Foster carers who continue to offer a placement on a staying put basis receive the equivalent of the household element of the 16+ fostering allowance. If the Staying Put provider was previously a Contract Carer or Independent Fostering Agency Carer the provider will be paid an additional fee, which will usually reduce over a period of two years as the young person gains increasing independence. Christmas and birthday allowance will cease to be paid once the young person reaches 18 years of age.

Payments to carers will come from a number of different sources dependent upon the young person's individual circumstances.

- All young people will be expected to make a claim for housing benefit to help with the rent element of the supported lodgings payment
- Where appropriate, young people will also be expected to claim benefits
- Young people who are in work and receiving an adequate salary should be paying rent

14.2 Care leavers in higher education

Where care leavers who are in higher education are receiving ongoing support from their ex-foster carer, former foster carers / former staying put providers who keep in contact with, or are supporting a care leaver in higher education may claim £169.76 per term towards their costs.

The young person's Care Leaver Personal Advisor will notify Placements Finance Team at cs.pft@derbyshire.gov.uk to confirm these arrangements and to generate payments, at the beginning of each term.

14.3 Leaving care grants (setting up home allowance)

All care leavers moving towards living independently may receive a grant which is accessed via their social worker or the Care Leaver Personal Advisor.

15 ALLOWANCES FOR CONVERSIONS TO OTHER ORDERS

Arrangements for the payment and support of foster carers who convert to Adoption, Child Arrangements Order or Special Guardianship Orders are contained in a separate information leaflet, which can be obtained by contacting the placements finance team.

16 ARRANGEMENTS FOR PAYMENTS

Payments are always made in arrears, and cover the number of days a child spends in a foster carer's home. The payment week applies from a Friday to Thursday. All allowances are paid on a weekly basis through BACS.

16.1 Weekly payments by BACS

Weekly payments by BACS are available for access on Friday of each week.

16.2 Overpayments

If you continue to receive payments after a child has left your care, you should contact the Placements Finance Team immediately.

When a child leaves your care, payment of allowances will continue to the end of that payment week.

Overpayments will be dealt with in one of the following ways:

- If you have other foster children, the overpayment will be deducted from future payments in respect of those children
- Derbyshire County Council will issue an invoice for the outstanding amount

16.3 Tax statement

Tax statements are sent out at the end of each financial year, along with a general guide regarding Foster Carers and Tax.

Derbyshire County Council have contracted with FosterTalk to support foster carers who have any questions regarding tax.

All our foster carers can contact FosterTalk on their confidential helpline number: 01527 836910

17 QUERIES, SUGGESTIONS & COMPLAINTS REGARDING FINANCES

17.1 Queries

Any queries regarding payments and overpayment should be referred to:

Placements Finance Team
Telephone - Matlock (01629) 532117, 532113 or 532043
Or email - CS.PFT@derbyshire.gov.uk

17.2 Correspondence

Any correspondence or returned cheques should be sent to:

Placements Finance Team
Room 269 North Block, County Hall, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4
3AG

Copies of forms referred to in this handbook can be obtained from your Fostering Support Team or from the Placements Finance Team

17.3 General Queries, Suggestions and Complaints

Any general financial queries should be referred to your Fostering Support Team.

As foster carers you have the right to make a complaint, either on your own behalf or on behalf of the child you are caring for. For further information:

- *See the **Foster Carer Handbook** or*
- *Consult the leaflet **Suggestions and Complaints** or*
- *Write to **Mary Wilton Head of Children in Care provision***

**Derbyshire County Council,
FREEPOST MID23957,
Matlock,
Derbyshire,
DE4 9BR**

• *Or Call Derbyshire 01629 533190*

Appendix 1

Allowances for Fostering Equipment 2020/2021

All carers must discuss what equipment is required with their Supervising Social Worker before purchasing any goods. If it is agreed that equipment can be purchased directly by the carer please ensure that a VAT receipt is obtained and given to their worker for reimbursement.

The prices are the **maximum** allowances that will be paid for each piece of equipment. If you require specialist equipment for a baby/child or a young person in care, this should be discussed and agreed with the carer's worker.

There is already a process for texting foster carers about available equipment which is proving effective and there are plans to develop a webpage portal during 2020/21 which will enable foster carers to Swap and Share equipment that is no longer needed, but is in good condition.

Preferred providers are:

MOTHERCARE DIRECT	UNITED CARPETS & BEDS	ILKESTON FURNITURE CENTRE COMPANY LTD - ILKESTON
ARGOS *	BOOTS	RICHARDSONS FURNITURE - SWADLINCOTE
BENSONS FOR BEDS	THORPES OF ILKESTON	RIPLEY BED CENTRE - RIPLEY
DUNELM	LEISURE FURNISHINGS LTD – LONG EATON	KF COMFORT – BOLSOVER
HALFORDS	ANNE'S BABY CENTRE - ALFRETON	TODDLIN – GLOSSOP
KID RAPT LTD	TOONS FURNISHERS - SWADLINCTOE	HIGH PEAK FURNITURE - BUXTON
GAILARDE LTD – Household Textiles	SILLY SIDS - DERBY	

Information for Fostering Workers:

*For Argos purchases, please contact Julia Apperley or Nicola Wood from the Procurement Team for the account number and business card details prior to ordering.

Please refer to and familiarise yourself with the Procurement of Goods & Services (Protocols 7&8) – CS – V1.1 for procedures for ordering equipment. Available on Dnet at

http://dnet/policies_and_procedures/caya/caya/business_support/finance/default.asp

For further information on the procurement procedures or preferred providers, please contact Julia Apperley or Nicola Wood, Senior Procurement Officers on VOIP 36854 or 36285

Allowances for each piece of equipment.

Babies and Toddlers:

Description	Maximum Allowance	Description	Maximum Allowance
Carer facing pram/pushchairs – All carers purchasing a new pram should ensure that it enables the carer to be face to face with the baby/child whilst pushing the pram	Single - £600 Double - £800	Mattress Protector	£20
Cot bed	£200	Flat cot sheet	£15
Cot bed mattress	£100	Fitted cot sheet	£15
Cot	£150	Blankets	£15
Cot mattress	£85	Changing bag	£50
Cot duvet & pillow set	£25	Changing mat	£15
Cot duvet & pillowcase set	£30	Fireguard	£30
Towels	£10	Safety gate	£30
Baby bath	£20	Car seat (Birth)	£150
Foam bath support	£8	Baby monitor	£80
Travel cot/playpen	£50	Baby carrier	£40
Highchair	£50	Bouncer	£50
Steriliser & bottles	£75	High back booster seat	£50

Older Children & Young People:

Description	Maximum Allowance	Description	Maximum Allowance
Single bed	£150	Pillow	£10
Wardrobe	£150	Single bed sheet	£20
Set of drawers	£100	Duvet cover & pillowcase set	£30
Desk (12+)	£100	Towels	£10
Single mattress	£150		
Single Duvet	£25	Car booster seat	£20

All children should be provided with their own suitcase each up to a maximum allowance of £50. It is not acceptable for children to move placements with their belongings in a bin bag.