

FOSTERING ALLOWANCES AND FEES GUIDE

Jan 2024

**Derbyshire County Council Children's Services
Version 1.1**

Introduction

This guide provides a summary of the different allowances and fees available for Derbyshire County Council foster carers. This guide should be read alongside the Annual Fostering Allowances and Fees document.

The information contained within this guide supersedes any previous financial framework documents relating to fostering allowances and fees.

The guide is made up of two sections:

- Allowances and fees, providing a summary of each type of allowance and fee, what they are intended for, how they are calculated and claimed, and who is eligible to claim.
- Appendices, providing additional information to foster carers in respect to allowance and fees.

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1.0 Allowances and Fees Eligibility

Table 1 provides an overview of the types of foster carer and allowances and fees available to them.

Allowances & Fees	Weekly Allowances				Regular Annual Allowances	Additional Annual Allowances	Other Allowances and Financial Assistance											Professional Fees	Contract Care Rates							
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10	10	11	11	11	11	11	11	12	12	12	12	13	14	14	15	15	15	
Page	Weekly Fostering Allowance (WFA)	Short Break Allowance	Link Carers Allowance	Support Carers Allowance	Birthday Allowance	Festivals Allowance	Annual Clothing Allowance	Annual Holiday Allowance	Start-up Allowance	Uniform Allowance	Mileage Allowance	Out-of-hours Allowance	Monthly Computer Allowance	IT Grants for Foster Families	Fostering Equipment Grants	Special Allowances	Hospitality Allowance	Training/Marketing Allowance	Recommend a Friend	Mentoring Scheme	Annual Recognition Scheme	Fostering Professional Fee (FPF)	FPF Retention Fee	Contract Care Rates	Short Break Contract Care Rates	Short Break Disability Contract Care Rates
Mainstream	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Short break		✓																								
Link Carers			✓																							
Support Carers				✓																						
Family & Friends (approved)	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Family & Friends (Pre-approved)	✓					✓	✓			✓	✓				✓											
Contract Care						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
Short Break Contract Care											✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	
Short Break Disability Contract Care											✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓					✓

Full size version available on final page (Appendix E)

Please ask your Supervising Social Worker if you need to clarify eligibility.

2.0 Weekly and Day Allowances

Weekly and daily fostering allowances to cover the basic costs of maintaining a child/young person in foster care.

2.1 Weekly Fostering Allowance (WFA)

A weekly allowance made to fostering households providing long-term foster care to cover weekly child / young person maintenance costs.

- Allowance is processed automatically, per child, every week.
- The allowance is age related, per child.
- For guidance Derbyshire recommends the Weekly Fostering Allowance be allocated as follows:

Clothing	Transport	Household	Total
15%	9%	76%	100%

- During planned short break periods, the 14-day rule* may apply which could affect the WFA allowance (*see Appendix C for further details).

In addition, mainstream foster carers receive a Fostering Professional Fee (FPF) based on their Skills Band.

2.1.1 WFA – Clothing

- For the normal replacement of everyday clothing.
- Foster carers should keep receipts for clothing purchases for six months **after the end of the placement.**
- Where a child/young person moves on, any clothing that has been purchased for them should move with them.

ADDITIONAL CLOTHING ALLOWANCES: SEE START-UP ALLOWANCE (P. 10); ANNUAL CLOTHING ALLOWANCE (P. 9); UNIFORM ALLOWANCE (P. 10) AND SPECIAL ALLOWANCES (P.11).

2.1.2 WFA - 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. This includes:

- Routine trips for medical/dentist appointments if local to the foster carer's home.
- Transport to and from school where the school is less than two miles from the foster home for under 8-year-olds, and less than three miles from the foster home for over 8-years-olds.

ADDITIONAL MILEAGE ALLOWANCES: SEE MILEAGE ALLOWANCE (P. 10).

2.1.3 WFA – 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.
- Child/young person's personal items such as toiletries and toys.
- Leisure activities and clubs.
- Life story work and keeping logs.
- A child's/young person's pocket money & savings (see below).

FOR ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR HOUSEHOLD RELATED EXPENDITURE SEE: FOSTERING EQUIPMENT GRANTS (P. 11); IT GRANTS (P. 11); SPECIAL ALLOWANCES (P. 11).

2.1.4 Pocket money & savings

A child's/young person's pocket money and long-term savings are identified within the Household element of the Weekly Fostering Allowance. The recommended amounts of pocket money and savings foster carers are expected to provide a child/young person is provided in the Annual Allowance and Fees Update.

For long term savings, foster carers are to invest in a Child ISA account.

Derbyshire County Council's Children in Care Savings and Pocket Money Policy is currently under review. Speak to your Supervising Social Worker for further information.

2.2 Short Break Allowance

Short break care for children / young people who live with another foster carer family.

- Depending upon need, this allowance can be provided as:
 - a day allowance,
 - weekly allowance (pro rata, including an overnight premium),
- Allowance processed weekly.
- Allowance processed automatically dependent upon provision type provided.
- The allowance is age related, per child / young person.
- Short Break Foster Carers allowance is based upon the Weekly Fostering Allowance (WFA).
- Short Break Foster Carers allowance includes a retention element.
- Day allowances are calculated based upon pro-rata Weekly Fostering Allowance.
- Where overnight care is provided, this is recognised in a higher weekly allowance applied pro-rata for the length stay/number of days care provided.
- Derbyshire County Council recommends the Short Break Allowance be allocated as follows:

Activities	Transport	Household	Total
15%	9%	76%	100%

The Short Break allowance covers:

- 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.

In addition, Short Break Foster Carers receive a pro-rata Fostering Professional Fee based on their Skills Band.

ADDITIONAL ALLOWANCES AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT SEE: FOSTERING EQUIPMENT GRANTS (P. 11); IT GRANTS (P. 11); MILEAGE ALLOWANCE (P. 10).

2.3 Link Care Allowance

Link Care is a specialist fostering scheme providing short break care for children / young people with a disability who live at home with their family.

- Depending upon need, this allowance can be provided as:
 - a day allowance.
 - weekly allowance (pro rata, including an overnight premium).
- Allowance processed weekly.
- Allowance processed automatically dependent upon provision type provided.
- The allowance is age related, per child / young person.
- Link carers allowance is based upon the Weekly Fostering Allowance (WFA).
- Link carers allowance includes a retention element.

- Day allowances are calculated based upon pro-rata Weekly Fostering Allowance plus Disability Living Allowance (based on DLA at higher rate care component).
- Where overnight care is provided, this is recognised in a higher weekly allowance applied pro-rata for the length stay/number of days care provided.
- An **Additional Health Needs Allowance** is provided for Children/ young people with additional health care needs.

The allowance covers:

- 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.

In addition, Link Carers receive a pro-rata Fostering Professional Fee based on their Skills Band.

The length of the placement will be agreed in advance by the social worker at a Resource Allocation meeting. The following should be agreed in advance of the placement:

- 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.

Additional funding via Special Allowances may be available for more costly activities or provisions that have been agreed with the child's/young person's social worker and supervising social worker.

ADDITIONAL ALLOWANCES AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT SEE: FOSTERING EQUIPMENT GRANTS (P. 11), IT GRANTS (P. 11); MILEAGE ALLOWANCE (P. 10); SPECIAL ALLOWANCES (P. 11).

2.4 Support Care Allowance

Support Care allowance is for close family and friends of a fostering household who provide 'short breaks' (see 14-day rule Appendix C) and 'childcare' to support the Foster Carers.

- Allowance processed weekly, through the main carer to forward on to the close family friend / relative.
- Allowance processed automatically.
- The allowance is age related, per child / young person.
- Where overnight care is provided, this is recognised in a higher weekly allowance applied pro-rata for the length stay/number of days care provided.
- Support Care Allowances are based upon the Weekly Fostering Allowance (WFA) minus the clothing element (pro rata).

Support Care Allowances are paid to the main foster carer to reimburse the support carer for any out-of-pocket expenses, for example:

- 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.

3.0 Regular Annual Allowances

Regular Annual Allowances cover the cost of key one-off annual events:

3.1 Birthday Allowance

Allowance made to fostering households to contribute to the costs for birthday celebrations.

- Allowances are processed automatically two weeks before the child's / young person's birthday.
- Based upon an additional week of the Weekly Fostering Allowance.
- **18th birthday is based upon two weeks** of the 16+ Weekly Fostering Allowance.

3.2 Festivals Allowance

Allowance made to fostering households to contribute to the costs of Christmas or other religious festivals (by arrangement).

- Allowances are processed automatically three weeks before the festivity.
- Based upon an additional week of the Weekly Fostering Allowance.

4.0 Additional Annual Allowances

Annual Allowances that can be claimed each financial year if required.

4.1 Annual Clothing Allowance

Allowance is in addition to the clothing element in the Weekly Fostering Allowance and Uniform Allowance.

- Allowance made to fostering households to contribute to the costs of additional clothing and/or uniform.
- Claim can be made each financial year, either one full claim per child per year or two claims at 50% per child per year.
- Claimed by the foster carer when required.
- Based upon an additional week of the Weekly Fostering Allowance.

4.2 Annual Holiday Allowance

Allowance made to fostering households to contribute to the costs of taking the child on holidays or for school holidays and trips.

- Can also be claimed for stay-at-home holidays to cover the cost of days-out.
- Up to a maximum of three weeks can be claimed within each financial year.
- The Annual Holiday Allowance can be split into two or three separate claims (for example, three 1-week claims or one 1-week claim plus one 2-week claim).
- Based upon three additional weeks of the Weekly Fostering Allowance.
- Claimed by the foster carer when required.

Note: **pre-Approved Family and Friends** are eligible for one-week holiday allowance.

FOR ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL/EDUCATIONAL TRIPS SEE SPECIAL ALLOWANCES (P. 11).

5.0 Other Allowances and Financial Assistance

5.1 Start-up Support Allowance.

A one-off allowance to contribute to the cost of emergency clothing for the child, when a child / young person enters mainstream Derbyshire foster care.

- Claimed by the social worker on behalf of the foster carer when required / agreed.
- Allowance processed in a maximum of one claim.
- Claim to be made within the first two weeks of a child/young person entering Derbyshire foster care for the first time.

5.2 Uniform Allowance

Allowance made to fostering households to contribute to the costs of a uniform when a child / young person starts a new school / college.

- Claimed by the foster carer when required.
- Claim can be made when child / young person starts a new or transferred to school (requiring a different uniform) or post 16 (education / training opportunity).
- One off allowance at the start of a new school / post 16 (education / training).
- Individual approval required for nurseries that require a uniform.

5.3 Mileage Allowances

Additional travel expenses incurred by foster carers in respect to their fostering duties and responsibilities not covered by the transport element in the Weekly Fostering Allowance or equivalent.

- Claimed by the foster carer when required and agreed in advance.
- Aligned with HMRC rates.
- Processed on a monthly basis.

Examples of specified journeys in relation to **childcare duties**:

- Attending a review, case conference or planning meeting about a foster child/young person.
- Contact visits.
- Medical appointments - specialist health professional / hospital visit.
- Legal appointments - attend court / see a solicitor or a child's/young person's guardian.
- Educational - journeys to school are payable only in certain circumstances agreed by the foster child's social worker.

Examples of specific journeys in relation to a **foster carer's duties**:

- Training events.
- Foster carer meetings – e.g., foster carer panels.

- Assisting with recruitment, training, or similar activities.
- Attending countywide meetings of foster carer representatives.

5.4 Out-of-Hours Allowance

Out-of-Hours Allowance to support emergency placement provision.

- Fostering households providing emergency foster care when emergency placements are made outside of normal office hours by the out of hours team.
- Out of hours are Monday to Friday 5pm to 9am, Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays.
- Allowance in recognition of this critical service.
- Allowance processed automatically.
- Allowance per child / young person.

5.5 Monthly Computer Allowance

Enabling access to online communications and information to support foster carers and child / young person.

- A monthly allowance towards the cost of broadband provision and computer consumables such as printer ink and paper.
- Allowance processed automatically.
- Further details provided in Appendix C.

5.6 IT Grant Scheme for Foster Families

A grant towards the cost of a laptop/PC for use in the foster carer's home.

- To enable foster carers to access online communications and information and perform their duties as a foster carer.
- Claimed by the foster carer when required / agreed.
- Grants are available to Foster Carers every four years.
- Further information about the IT Grant Scheme is provided in Appendix C.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE MAY ALSO BE ENTITLED TO A GRANT TO PURCHASE IT EQUIPMENT TO SUPPORT THEIR EDUCATION. PLEASE SPEAK TO YOUR SUPERVISING SOCIAL WORKER FOR MORE INFORMATION.

5.7 Fostering Equipment Grants

Fostering Equipment grants so foster carers can purchase equipment required for the child/young person in care.

- Claimed by social worker on behalf of the foster carer when required.
- Any equipment requirements need to be discussed and agreed in advance with the Supervising Social Worker.
- See Appendix D Equipment guidance for further details.

5.8 Special Allowances

Special Allowances are claimable in respect of additional expenditure incurred by foster carers that are not covered by other allowances.

Special Allowances need to be agreed in discussion with the Child's Social Worker and Supervising Social Worker before a claim can be made.

- Special Allowances can be claimed using the online Special Allowances Claim Form.

Examples of Special Allowances include:

- Compensation for damage or exceptional wear and tear to foster carers home or property.
- Special dietary requirements of a child / young person.
- Specialist clothing needs.
- Additional costs associated with the specific health needs of a child/young person.
- Additional books or equipment needed for school.
- Additional costs associated with school holidays and trips.
- Activities not covered by other allowances and that are considered to be in the child's/young person's best interest (e.g., horse riding/music lessons).
- Additional materials for life story work (e.g., professional photographs).
- One off events (e.g. School Prom).

5.9 Hospitality Allowance

Hospitality Allowance, for fostering households to provide hospitality in their own home to adopters/special guardians as part of the introduction process.

- Claimed via the Supervising Social Worker when required / agreed.
- Allowance based upon agreed standard rate.

5.10 Training / Marketing Allowance

An allowance for foster carers involved with the planning and/or delivery of training or planned marketing events.

- Claimed via the Supervising Social Worker when required / agreed

5.11 Recommend a friend 'recruitment'

Recommend a friend who then becomes a full-time foster carer and when takes up first placement.

- Claimed via the Supervising Social Worker when first child/young person is placed.

5.12 Mentoring Scheme

Providing peer support to newly approved carers.

- For experienced foster carers who meet the required criteria.
- Providing peer support to newly approved carers over a six-month period.
- Limited to two mentoring relationships at any one time.
- Maximum of four mentoring arrangements per year.
- Claimed via the Supervising Social Worker when first child/young person is placed.

5.13 Annual Recognition Scheme (in development)

This scheme is currently under development. Date for implementation to be confirmed.

6.0 Other Benefits for Approved Foster Carers

6.1 Leisure pass

As an approved foster carer, you're entitled to a free leisure pass for yourself and your entire family.

The pass gives the following benefits:

- All Derbyshire children in care aged 16 or under are entitled to free swimming
- All foster carers' children living at the carer's address and aged 16 or under are entitled to free swimming
- All Derbyshire-approved foster carers are entitled to free swim and gym sessions
- All Derbyshire care leavers aged 17 to 21 (up to 24 if still accessing after-care services) are entitled to free swim and gym sessions

6.2 Foster carer's library ticket

Foster carers can have an additional foster carer's library ticket as well as the usual personal library tickets for family members.

6.3 Blue Light Discount Card

Blue Light Card provides foster carers with discounts online and in-store. For further details and to register see the [Blue Light website](#).

6.4 Max Card

Max card is the UK's leading discount card for foster families and families of children with additional needs. Includes free or discounted admission to venues and attractions across the UK. For further information and enquires see the [Max Card website](#).

6.5 FosterTalk

Free membership of FosterTalk, providing independent support services to foster carers in the UK. See the [FosterTalk website](#) for further details.

7.0 Professional Fees

7.1 Fostering Professional Fee (FPF) (previously known as Fostering Skills Allowance)

Fostering Professional Fee (FPF) recognises foster carers' skills, experience, and training.

- Foster carers are placed in a skills band dependent upon their experience and training record:
 - Foundation
 - Band A
 - Band B
 - Band C
 - Band D
- Progress can be made through each skill band by successfully completing annual reviews and meeting the levels of experience, training requirements for each band.
- FPF is processed automatically, per child, every week.

Speak to your Supervising Social Worker for further details regarding current banding criteria.

7.2 FPF Retention Fee

Links to the Fostering Professional Fee (FPF) when a full-time mainstream foster carer has no current placements, in recognition of the potential period between placements.

- Retention Fee is processed automatically when the foster carer household has no children in placement.
- Retention Fee is processed weekly at 50% of the main carers FPF Skill Banding, for a period of up to 12 weeks from when the final placement ends.
- Retention Fee will only be made when carers are available to accept another placement within the first 12 weeks from when the last placement ended.
- Retention Fee is based upon the maximum of one child placement only.

8.0 Contract Care Schemes

Specialist schemes providing young people with more complex needs with a family-based alternative. Specific terms of reference in regards the Contract Care Schemes are available upon request.

Contract Care contains three elements: the Contract Care Scheme, Short Break Contract Care Scheme and Short Break Disability Contract Care Scheme.

Contract Care Rates are a combination of a Contract Care Fee and Allowances.

Reflective practice sessions required by the scheme are recognised in an additional annual allowance.

Contract Care Rates are a combination of the Contract Care Fee and weekly allowances.

Please note, the only change is full rates now apply for every additional child/young person cared for.

These schemes are currently under ongoing review.

8.1 Contract Care Fees

Contract Carers receive a Contract Care Fee in recognition Carers are unable to undertake paid employment.

- A basic weekly Contract Care Fee.
- Short Break Contract Carers receive pro-rata the basic weekly Contract Care Fee.
- Short Break Disability Contract Carers receive pro-rata an enhanced Contract Care Fee.
- Fees are paid per child and processed automatically.

8.2 Contract Care Allowances

All Contract Care Allowances are based on the Weekly Fostering Allowance.

- The allowance is dependent on the type of contract care provided, is aged related and automatically processed per child / young person, per week.
- Short Break Contract Care Scheme allowances are calculated pro-rata minus a weekly fostering allowance clothing element.

8.3 Short Break Disability Contract Care Scheme Allowances

Short Break Disability Contract Care Allowances are based on the Weekly Fostering Allowance (WFA) plus Disability Living Allowance (DLA at higher rate care component).

- Overnight stays are calculated pro-rata.
- Day and part-day allowances are calculated as a proportion of the pro-rata weekly allowance:
 - Day Rate = ((Weekly allowance + DLA) / 7) x 0.75
 - Part Day Rate = ((Weekly allowance + DLA) / 7) x 0.5

- An Additional Health Care Allowance is available for eligible children/young people.

9.0 Family & Friends (Reg24)

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, temporary approval of a child's relatives or family friends under Fostering Regulation 24 may be given for up to 16 weeks, with an option to extend this to a maximum of 24 weeks. Within this time a report must be presented to the Fostering Panel for the applicants to be considered for approval as a Family and Friends Foster Carer.

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 one weeks Holiday allowance can be paid prior to approval as foster carers, with the remaining two weeks Holiday allowance payable post-approval.
- Family and Friends Carers can apply for Derbyshire leisure passes through their supervising social worker. They will be able to use them for six months and then if they are approved longer term they will be issued with another one.

Appendix A - Payments

Payments

Foster carers' Allowances and Fee payments are made in arrears. The payment week applies from a Monday to Sunday. All allowances are paid on a weekly basis via BACS for available access on each Friday each week.

- Weekly fostering allowances and professional fees are paid pro-rata to cover the number of days a child spends in a foster carer's home.
- Automatic allowance payments are processed along with weekly allowances and professional fees when applicable.
- Allowances claimed via online claims forms are normally processed 10 days of being received

Overpayments

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

If you continue to receive payments after a child has left your care, you should contact the Children and Shared Lives Team immediately.

Any **queries** regarding payments and overpayment should be referred to:

Children and Shared Lives Team

Telephone - Matlock (01629) 532117

Email - cst.cfs.children@derbyshire.gov.uk

Any **financial correspondence**, including returned cheques, should be sent to:

Children and Shared Lives Team

County Hall, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3AG

Receipts

As a self-employed foster carer you need to ensure you comply with all statutory HMRC regulations. Your social worker may also request copies of receipts to ensure compliance with the Local Authorities financial regulations.

Tax Statements

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

FosterTalk are now working with Derbyshire to support foster carers who have any questions regarding tax. All our foster carers can contact FosterTalk on their confidential helpline number: 0121 758 5013.

Appendix B - Glossary of Terms

Some common terms and schemes associated with Derbyshire County Council's Foster Care service.

Childcare, helping foster carers to work, train or study.

Connected Carers, see Family and Friends.

Contract Care – Disabled Children, long-term care or regular short breaks for children/young people with severe disabilities.

Contract Care, long-term care or regular short breaks for children/young people with complex needs aged between 10 and 18 years.

Emergency Fostering, short-term fostering care for emergency placements.

Family & Friends Fostering, family, friends, or any other person connected to the child/young person, that legally provide a foster home for that child/young person. Also known as Kinship Fostering, Connected Carers and Reg 24 placements (see Reg 24).

Forward to Foster, a wraparound support package for children/young people moving from residential care to a foster home. Part of the Contract Care Scheme.

Kinship Fostering, see Family and Friends.

Link Care, the Link Care scheme provides short breaks for children/young people with disabilities who normally live at home with their families.

Long-term Fostering, where children/young person(s) stay at the same foster home for several years, often until they reach 18 and become independent adults.

Mainstream Fostering, long-term or short break fostering for mainstream children/young people.

Parent & Child Fostering, temporary fostering providing support to new parents and their child/children.

Pre-approved Family and Friends Foster Carer, a temporary arrangement under Regulation 24 to allow a Friend and Family carer to provide emergency fostering care to a child/young person for up to 16 weeks with an option to extend this to a maximum of 24 weeks. During this time the fostering assessment will be completed under the Reg 24 framework.

Reg 24, the legal framework under which anyone with a close connection with a child/young person can become their legal Foster Carer. The assessment process normally takes 16 weeks.

Respite Foster Care, see Short Break Fostering.

Short-term Fostering, temporary, interim fostering for children and young people prior to longer-term placements.

Short Breaks to maintain healthy relationships and stability of a placement, providing foster carers with a break from caring responsibilities.

Short Break Fostering, planned short-term care for children, providing short breaks for long-term foster carers. There are separate Short Break fostering schemes for Mainstream Fostering and Contract Care.

Specialist Fostering, specialist fostering schemes are designed for children and young people with more complex needs who would otherwise be placed in residential or with specialist agencies. Includes the Contract Care Scheme and Link Care schemes.

Special Guardianship Order (SGO) is an Order under the Children Act appointing one or more persons as legal guardian of a child and provides a legally secure placement for a child until they are 18. It is an alternative to adoption or fostering.

Stay Over Breaks, see Short Break Fostering.

Staying Put, when a young person in foster care continues to live with their foster carer after they turn 18. Different financial arrangements apply for young people Staying Put when they reach 18 years of age.

Supported Lodging Provider, a scheme providing a home for young people 16 years or over who are leaving care or is at risk of homelessness. Carers do not have to be registered foster carers.

Appendix C – Supplementary Information for foster carers

Mainstream Overnights Short Break 14-day rule Long-term mainstream foster carers can take up to 14 days planned short breaks each financial year, which is recorded in the Child Care Plan. Short breaks can be provided by approved 'Short Break foster carers' or 'support carers'.

- Foster carers will continue to receive both the Weekly Fostering Allowance (WFA) and Fostering Professional Fee (FPF) for a period of up to 14 days.
- Short Breaks for more than 14 days needs to be approved by the Fostering Operations Manager.
- Beyond 14 days the foster carer will no longer receive the WFA.
- One day equals a whole day when the child is not with the main foster carer. For example, a child leaves main carer on a Monday and returns on Wednesday. This will count as one day or your 14-day rule entitlement.
- Not applicable to Short Break Foster Carers.

Contract Care Short Break rule Long-term Contract Care Carers take up to 28 days short-breaks per year.

- Long-term Contract Care Carers will continue to receive the Contract Care Fee for a period of up to 28 days.
- They will not receive the Weekly Fostering Allowance during any short-break period.
- Beyond 28 days the foster carer will no longer receive the Contract Care Fee.
- Not applicable to Short Break Contract Care Carers.
- One day equals a whole day when the child is not with the contract foster carer, e.g., Child leaves contract carer on a Monday and returns on Wednesday. This will count as one day or your 28-day rule entitlement.

IT Grant Scheme Foster carers are entitled to a grant to purchase IT equipment which can be used by the whole family. Foster carers are entitled to a renewal of the Fostering IT grant every four 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.
- The IT Acceptable Use Policy can also be found on the Derbyshire County Council [fostering website](#)
- This must be read in full, the terms and conditions agreed and submitted with the grant application form
- Receipts for purchases will be recorded.
- All receipts must be kept, and a copy must be sent within 28 days of receiving the grant to the email or postal address below (to comply with audit and financial regulations).
- Please note this IT equipment belongs to the foster carer not the child/young person in placement.

For further details and to apply, email bs.fosteringcontinuity@derbyshire.gov.uk.

Computer Allowance All Derbyshire County Council approved foster carers receive a monthly payment 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 two months.

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.

Allowances for Conversion to Other Orders Arrangements for the payment and support of foster carers who convert to Adoption, Child Arrangements Order or Special Guardianship Orders by contacting the Social Worker.

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.

Examples:

- overnight contact with parents
- school trips
- overnight visits to friends

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.

Child 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.

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.

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 chair of the panel may recommend that payments continue for a further fixed period of time with the decision made by the Agency Decision Maker.

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

Childcare Scheme for Foster Carers To enable foster carers who have some work commitments but still wish to foster.

- Foster Carers are 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.
 - Accessing the government's 30 hours free childcare or,
 - Approved close friends and family (paid Support Care Day Allowance).

The Foster Carer, Registered Child Care Provider, Close Family & Friends will all need to be approved by the Supervising Social Worker and Children's Social Worker.

- Speak to your Supervising Social Worker for further details.

Care Leavers & Staying Put

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. Speak to your Supervising Social Worker for more information on Care Leavers and Staying Put arrangements.

Complaint Procedure As foster carers you have the right to make a complaint, either on your own behalf or on behalf of the child/young person you are caring for.

See Derbyshire County Council's [complaints procedure](#) for further information.

Complaints can be made **in writing** to:

The Head of Children in Care Provision
Derbyshire County Council,
FREEPOST MID23957
Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 9BR

Or **telephone** Call Derbyshire on 01629 533190.

Appendix D – Fostering Equipment

Swap and Share - Preloved Equipment

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.

Check with central fostering team at County Hall with your equipment requests – cots, prams, highchairs, stair gates, car seats, baby monitors etc.

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

Equipment will only be reused if in safe and excellent condition.

Purchasing New Equipment

All foster carers must discuss what equipment is required with their Supervising Social Worker before purchasing any equipment needed. If agreed, foster carers who purchase equipment themselves will need to obtain a VAT receipt and send a copy to their Supervising Social Worker.

Appendix E Eligibility matrix

Allowances & Fees	Weekly Allowances				Regular Annual Allowances		Additional Annual Allowances		Other Allowances and Financial Assistance										Professional Fees		Contract Care Rates						
	Weekly Fostering Allowance (WFA)	Short Break Allowance	Link Carers Allowance	Support Carers Allowance	Birthday Allowance	Festivals Allowance	Annual Clothing Allowance	Annual Holiday Allowance	Start-up Allowance	Uniform Allowance	Mileage Allowance	Out-of-hours Allowance	Monthly Computer Allowance	IT Grants for Foster Families	Fostering Equipment Grants	Special Allowances	Hospitality Allowance	Training/Marketing Allowance	Recommend a Friend	Mentoring Scheme	Annual Recognition Scheme	Fostering Professional Fee (FPF)	FPF Retention Fee	Contract Care Rates	Short Break Contract Care Rates	Short Break Disability Contract Care Rates	
Page	4	6	6	7	9	9	9	9	10	10	10	11	11	11	11	11	12	12	12	12	12	13	14	14	15	15	15
Mainstream	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Short break		✓																									
Link Carers			✓																								
Support Carers				✓																							
Family & Friends (approved)	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Family & Friends (Pre-approved)	✓				✓																						
Contract Care					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Short Break Contract Care																									✓		
Short Break Disability Contract Care																										✓	

END OF PUBLIC DOCUMENT