

Financial  
Policy for  
Children's  
Residential  
Services

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## Financial Policy for Children's Residential Services

### RESIDENTIAL SERVICES: FINANCIAL POLICY

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Within Warrington Borough Council it is the aim of the service to ensure all our children are made to feel they belong and that their needs are met as they would be for any other child.
- 1.2 This financial policy outlines monies that can be used to meet the needs of the children we care for. All children in our care should have their own bank account and should be encouraged to make use of this. One of the roles that we are required to undertake when looking after somebody's child is to ensure that they are able to develop the skills to manage their own finances when they move into adulthood. Therefore we need to meet the needs of our children while encouraging them to respect their personnel belongings

**Please read this policy in line with the petty cash policy**

#### **2. CLOTHING ALLOWANCE**

##### **Initial Clothing Allowance**

- 2.1 When children come to live with us they will have come from a variety of previous placements, one of our very first tasks should be to ensure they have adequate clothing to meet their needs, including underwear, nightwear and school uniform. An initial inventory of clothing should be taken and recorded and clothing purchased to meet any shortfall. The Registered Manager will provide a budget to be spent for initial clothing, this needs to be in conjunction with the delegated limits set by Warrington Borough Council. If further finance is required a request should be sent by the Registered Manager to the, including the initial clothing record and a list of what is required and the estimated costs for the items.
- 2.2 If children who come to live with us from another home and or provision of accommodation with insufficient clothing, a record should be shared with the social worker and or the fostering team or commissioning team for further follow up to be made with the provider.

##### **School Uniform,**

- 2.3 Children have up to £100 yearly for school uniforms.

##### **Clothing Allowance**

- 2.4 Will be allocated yearly. Allowance is: £840 per year.

### **3. SCHOOL/CLUBS ORGANISED HOLIDAYS AND TRIPS**

- 3.1 The cost of field trips and residential courses, which are an integral and necessary part of the child's school curriculum, will be met by individual one off payments. Approval for the cost of the trip must be obtained from the Registered Manager in consultation with the child's Social Worker before any commitments are given to the school or child. In establishing whether a trip is a necessary part of the curriculum, it should be checked that there is an expectation by the school that every child in the class or on the course will take part in the trip and the purpose of the trip links directly to class work or examination requirements.
- 3.2 It may well be identified that although it is not an essential part of the curriculum, the child's participation will promote their educational attainment.
- 3.3 Residential Services will not meet the cost of school organised holidays such as skiing holidays or visits to foreign countries, unless this has been identified in the child's care plan as a particular need.
- 3.4 The costs of passports should be met by the social workers team and all children should have a passports applied for when they become a child in care (unless this is not possible for legal reasons). This is the responsibility of the social worker and should be discussed at the point of placement. Once obtained a photocopy of the child's passport should be placed on the child's file.
- 3.5 Children should be encouraged to save pocket money towards the costs of organised school social trips.

### **4. POCKET MONEY**

- 4.1 All children will receive pocket money on a weekly basis children will be encouraged to save a proportion of their pocket money towards holidays etc. Pocket money can be deducted in line with effective consequence, up to 1/3 of their weekly pocket money each week. Where there are concerns around a child's wellbeing and their use of pocket money, a consequence of supervised pocket money may be put in place.
- 4.2 Primary school age: £6.50 per week.  
Secondary school age: £10.00 per week until they reach the age of independence.

### **5. MOBILE PHONE ALLOWANCE**

- 5.1 If deemed appropriate a child may receive a monthly allowance of £10 to purchase top up credit for their mobile phone. This should be risk assessed if there are concerns about a child's welfare in relation to a mobile phone the allowance will not be paid and an explanation given to the child.

## **6. TOILETETRIES**

- 6.1 As part of the shopping routine general household toiletries will be purchased to include, shampoo, conditioner, shower lotion, deodorant and sanitary products. Children should purchase additional products from their pocket money. (e.g. nail varnish etc.)  
When a child reaches Independence level they will be expected to purchase their own toiletries out of their weekly allowance.

## **7. REWARDS**

- 7.1 Children will receive rewards in accordance with the behaviour management policy; rewards will be given in the form of a ticket system, treats, and special activities etc. The ticket system is designed to instantly show acknowledgement and to reward our young people for positive behaviours he/she displays at home, no matter how big or small the achievement is. There will be a weekly reward chart with SMART targets aimed at addressing risks, improving behaviour or linked to the child's care plan. The ticket system will acknowledge planned targets, but will also allow the child to receive tickets by staff, every time there is acknowledgement of positive behaviour / choices the child makes. There is no limit to how many tickets a child can achieve during the day. Our young people can trade in the tickets for rewards when he/she has accumulated them. This means that our young people can trade in their tickets on a daily basis for small rewards or save them up for bigger rewards.

## **8. RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS ALLOWANCE/ BIRTHDAY ALLOWANCE**

- 8.1 Children will be allocated an allowance for presents to celebrate religious festivals and birthdays. Money will not be given directly to young people although they are able to decide what gifts they want and go shopping with staff.

- 8.2 Christmas/Festival Allowance  
Primary school age: £200  
Secondary school age and on Independence: £300

Birthdays  
Primary school age: £59.95  
Secondary school age and on Independence: £81.49

## **9. HOLIDAYS**

- 9.1 The full cost of any holidays organised by the home will be met. The cost of the holidays will need to be agreed by the Head of Service for children in care, dependant on the costings. Any decisions will be made in relation to the budgets and decisions in the best interests of the child and in conjunction with their care plan.
- 9.2 All holidays should be planned for in advance to ensure the best costings can be found and risk assessments are completed thoroughly.

- 9.3 Children should be encouraged to save pocket money towards the costs of holidays. Any specialist clothing for holidays should be met from the clothing allowance.

## **10. ACTIVITIES**

- 10.1 All children will be encouraged to engage in activities the cost of these activities in agreement with deputy or registered manager will be met by the home, including the cost of equipment.

## **11. DINNER MONEY**

- 11.1 All children attending school will have their dinner money paid by the home this may either be paid directly to school if there is a fixed cost or to the child if appropriate at a maximum of £4 per day. If there are concerns that a child is not spending their dinner money appropriately consideration should be given to the provision of a packed lunch.
- 11.2 For young people who attend schools were a snack is allowed all young people will also be provided with £1 snack money or as an alternative an appropriate snack.

## **12. INDEPENDENCE PLANNING**

- 12.1 All children regardless of age will be encouraged to develop skills to allow them to eventually live independently. It is our duty to prepare children this will form part of the pathway plan.
- 12.2 As part of a child's pathway plan money can be paid directly to them this should be agreed with the home, the child and their social worker the purpose and amount of any money paid should be made clear to the child. Consideration should be given as to whether this money is paid directly into the child's bank account.
- 12.3 Money allocated per week for independence is £60 and this will be to cover the cost of food, travel, mobile phone, activities and personal allowance.

## **13. P-CARDS**

- 13.1 P-cards will be issues to staff at the discretion of the Registered Manager and will be reviewed monthly. A cap of £100 per transition will be will be allocated to the card with a monthly limit of £500. (This does not apply to short break services)
- 13.2 Assistant managers and registered will have a £250 limit with a monthly limit of £1000.
- 13.3 Staff will not spend over £20 without the Registered/Assistant Manager's agreement, excluding weekly shopping, clothing for the children in line with their yearly budget, school uniforms, All other expenditure including activities will be agreed prior with the registered /assistant manager.
- 13.4 If P-cards are lost they must be reported to the Registered Manager immediately.

## **Residential services – staff financial policy and procedures**

- 13.5 All staff should be reading this in conjunction with Warrington Borough Council 'Financial Procedure Rules'.
- The financial procedure rules state that 'All staff and members have a duty to abide by the highest standards of probity in dealing with financial issues. This is facilitated by ensuring everyone is clear about the standards to which they are working and the controls that are in place to ensure that these standards are met...The Council operates in an environment of ever increasing demands on limited resources and consequently the process of budgetary control has become increasingly critical. The Council operates a cash limited approach to directorate budget management and does not have any capacity to absorb overspends in service budgets.

### **Ordering of Goods and Services**

#### **Why this is important**

- 13.6 A proper framework is important to help ensure that goods and services are purchased and paid for in the most efficient and cost effective manner. The Councils Financial Information System (SAP) should be used to raise all orders. Officers should consider the most appropriate order type for the item or service they are looking to purchase (e.g. catalogue item, limit order etc). SAP controls ensure that only authorised officers can raise and approve orders. Specific guidance on the use of SAP can be found in the relevant TUGs held on the Council s Intranet.

### **Payment of Employees**

#### **Why this is important**

- 13.7 Staff costs are the largest item of expenditure for most council services. It is therefore important that payments are accurate, timely, made only where they are due for services to the Council and that payments accord with individuals conditions of employment. It is also important that all payments are accurately and completely recorded and accounted for and that members allowances are authorised in accordance with the scheme adopted by the full Council. All staff members are individually responsible for the accuracy and completion of their timesheet and their line manager will authorise this in accordance to the timesheets supplied and stored electronically. No payment can be guaranteed if the paperwork is not provided within the required timescales.

## **14. RISK MANAGEMENT (INCLUDING INSURANCE), INTERNAL CONTROL AND PREVENTING FRAUD, BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION**

### **Introduction**

- 14.1 The Council is complex and beyond the direct control of individuals. It therefore requires internal controls to manage and monitor progress towards strategic objectives. It has statutory obligations and therefore requires internal controls to identify, meet and monitor compliance with these obligations. As a result it is essential that robust, integrated systems are developed and maintained for identifying and evaluating all

significant operational risks to the Council. This should include the proactive participation of all those associated with planning and delivering services.

### **Cheques**

- 14.2 Each house has access to a cheque book and if required, these can be used to pay for items such as school trips, termly dinner money, holidays etc.

### **Bank Accounts**

- 14.3 All looked after children within Warrington's residential homes should have a bank account; it is the responsibility of the keyworker to ensure that this is in place for all young people. This will be monitored by registered managers.

### **Imprest/Petty Cash**

- 14.4 The audit of the petty cash tin is a daily task identified in the log book; it is the responsibility of staff on duty to check this each shift. This will ensure early identification of any errors. The recording in the daily log book and audit of petty cash will be monitored during Regulation 44 and 45 checks.

### **Receipts/Recording**

- 14.5 It is the expectation that staff will record and provide receipts for any monies they spend either cash or procurement cards before they end their shift, it should be in exceptional circumstances when this is not completed. All staff should ensure they record who the child was that the money was used for by using their initials only and the purpose for the spending. Please be sensitive to how we record what money is being spent on e.g. Pregnancy test could say personal items.
- 14.6 It is the responsibility of Registered Managers to electronically authorise all of the procurement card transactions. If there is no receipt a missing receipt form should be completed and signed by the staff member and a manager.

### **Personal Responsibility**

- 14.7 It is the responsibility of each individual staff member to be accountable for the money that is spent during their working day. Audits will be undertaken on a regular basis and failure to comply with procedures will be addressed by the appropriate supervisor and could lead to disciplinary action.

