

Annex B

Foster Carer Training, Support and Remuneration Proposals

Training and Support

Our training and support offer is intended to provide carers with continued professional development opportunities. We will provide mandatory training which carers will be expected to attend, this will be complemented by additional training and development opportunities.

We have revised the training available to all Foster Carers and developed clear training expectations linked to the different Foster Carer levels. The targeted training offer will include;

- Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Foster Carers
- NSPCC Reflective Fostering training
- Mental Health and E Safety training
- Revised core training modules for new Foster Carers
- Increased access to training alongside Social Workers, provided and promoted by Workforce Development Unit within the Council
- Working with Foster Carers to explore their involvement in the delivery of training to other carers
- Working with Foster Carers and other professionals to understand, promote and implement delegated authority.

We are seeking to build on and enhance the support offer to Foster Carers by;

- Ensuring greater consistency of support across all Foster Carers including Short Break Foster Carers facilitated by the restructure of teams within Children Services
- Ensuring all Foster Carers are aware of York Foster Carer Association (YAFCA) and the support they provide
- Ensuring there is a range of support groups for carers which includes Gateways events, Surgery and support groups and master class informal training sessions.
- Exploring the provision of Psychology-led therapeutic input and clinical supervision for Foster Carers and Social Workers
- Improving the links between Foster Carers and the City of York Virtual School
- Working with Foster Carers to develop an out of hours support offer

- Working with Foster Carers to develop peer / buddy support between Foster Carers

Foster Carer Role and Expectation

The role and responsibility of all City of York Council (CYC) Foster Carers, (irrespective of the level) involves:

- The day-to-day care of children and young people placed with them by City of York Council and to provide them with the experience of normal family life
- Responding appropriately to the needs of looked-after children, for example health, education, religion, culture, race
- Working as part of a team that could include colleagues from a range of other services, including Children's Services, Health, Education, Housing, Youth Offending Team, Police
- Working within fostering and safeguarding policies and procedures

We have reviewed the Foster Carers' levels, we have made changes to the names and developed descriptions that clearly identify the tasks and responsibilities, experience and knowledge, training, support and development requirements and placement requirements for each level. The new levels are contained below. Existing fees payments are unchanged.

Level 1 (incorporating existing Accredited and Experienced carers)

Level 2 (incorporating existing Enhanced carers and Short Break Foster Carers)

Level 3 (incorporating existing Advanced carers and Contracted short break carers)

Fees and Allowances

We propose to make the following changes to fees and allowances.

- Continue to pay child allowances at the Government's minimum rates.
- Foster Carer fee amounts to remain the same however these will be more closely linked to revised role descriptions and expectations for different carer levels

- The following changes to additional allowances paid to Foster Carers are proposed; Increase the payment for multiple placements, a carer illness payment, emergency placement payment, delegated authority payment of £750, long service awards, school holiday allowance reduced to £300, mileages claims removed in relation to the first 200 miles per month, additional allowances for child leisure activities and hobbies replaced with delegated authority payment.
- Short Break Foster Carers will continue to be paid at their existing levels and will align in terms of expectation, support and training with mainstream carers.

The proposals contained in this briefing document relate to all Foster Carers within the Council, including:

- Mainstream Carers
- Short Break Foster Carers – contracted and non contracted
- Connected Carers
- Staying Put Carers

Short Break Foster Carers

Short Break Foster Carers (SBFC) provide short break support and care for disabled children and their families. Contracted SBFC are required to provide a set and agreed amount of short breaks each week for children often with more complex health and behavioural needs.

We propose to make the following changes to Short Break Foster Carers;

- To align the recruitment, assessment, expectation, support and training of contracted and non-contracted Short Break Carers with mainstream Foster Carers.
- To ensure that Short Break Foster Carers are paid a pro rata equivalent of the mainstream Foster Carer level they are aligned to. i.e. 2 and 3.
- Offer carer illness payment and long service award.
- Delegated authority payment will not apply due to the assumption that birth families will pay for hobbies and specific items.

Connected Carers

Connected Carers are carers who have a pre existing connection with the child or young person in placement. They could be a relative or

friend of the child / young person or family. Connected Carers are treated the same as mainstream, unconnected Foster Carers. They will be paid government set child allowance and the foster carer fee for the appropriate level. They will also be expected to participate in the training and support provided to all Foster Carers.

In terms of the additional child related allowances mentioned above, connected carers are eligible for the carer illness payment, delegated authority payment and emergency payment if they take an additional emergency placement. An emergency placement is defined as a same day placement that takes place without any pre planning with an approved carer.

Stay Put Carers

Staying Put Carers are Foster Carers or Connected Carers who keep a child or young person with them in placement beyond the age of 18 years. We propose the current fee payment of £210 per week, will remain the same. No other additional payments will be made, in line with the current practice.