



**Corporate Parenting Board February 2020**  
**Placement Finding Commissioning and Support Team – Gill Hall**

The Placement Finding Commissioning and Support Team have responsibility for supporting and training approved foster carers. This report is to provide an update to the Children in Care Strategic Partnership

At the year-end 31.12.19 we had:

172 children and young people in care.

100 Foster carers (68 mainstream carers / 62 connected households)

In order to provide safe and secure placements for our children and young people in care, we have a duty to provide appropriate support and training to the carers who are approved by City of York council. Our offer and ongoing developments are as below.

**Training**

Increased learning, development and training opportunities have been made available for Foster Carers including, revised core training modules for all Foster Carers to cover the basics of fostering and the statutory requirements of the role, leading onto more specialised training for Foster Carers. Therapeutic Crisis Intervention was offered to all carers and a dedicated course is being offered to Connected Carers in 2020. In addition to this carers attended two courses of the NSPCC Reflective Fostering training and Mental Health First Aid training.

## Support

Support has been increased for Foster Carers through 2019, Foster Carers have been made aware of the York Foster Carer Association (YAFCA) and the support they provide. In addition the Fostering team provides a range of support groups for carers which includes Gateway Events, Meet the Team events and support groups for main stream and connected carers. There has also been an Improvement in links between Foster Carers and the City of York Virtual School

## Changes to fees received

The Placement review made changes to the fees paid to Foster Carers. The child allowance set by the government remained the same, as did the basic Foster Carer fee with changes to the levels, however, in addition we have now implemented:

- Increase the payment for multiple placements
- Carer illness payment
- Emergency placement payment
- Delegated authority payment (0-4 aged children by request, 5-10yrs - £750, 11-15yrs £850, 16-17yrs £900) which has now replaced additional allowance requests for children's leisure activities and hobbies.
- The payment of Long Service awards for carers
- The additional school holiday allowance has been reduced from £400 to £300
- Foster Carer mileage claims removed in relation to the first 200 miles per month.

There is now increased clarity around Foster Carer role and expectations, the names and descriptors of each Foster Carer level have changed to level 1 to 3 ( 3 being the equivalent of the Advanced level) and the tasks and responsibilities, experience and knowledge, expectations regarding training requirements are now clearly defined.

### Short Breaks Foster Carers

Short Break Foster Carers have continued to be paid at their existing level and have now aligned in terms of expectations regarding support and training with mainstream carers. The main difference is that the delegated authority payment will not apply to Short Break Carers as birth families will pay for hobbies and specific items.

### Connected Carers

Connected Carers are treated the same as mainstream Foster Carers as they are approved under the Fostering Regulations. They are paid the 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 recognition of the distinct differences in their role, a separate Connected Carers support group is established and certain courses are being offered separately to Connected Carers. Connected Carers will be eligible for the carer illness payment, delegated authority payment and emergency payment if they take an additional emergency placement.

### Foster Carer Fees

Foster Carer fee amounts have remained the same and are now more closely linked to the expectations for different carer levels.

In April 2019 an annual increase of Foster Carer fees was not agreed, this was appealed by Foster Carers, and following an independent review it was agreed to pay a 2% uplift to level 1 and 2 carers in order to strengthen the recruitment strategy.

Gill Hall  
Service Manager  
PFCS team.