

Fostering fees and allowances summary

Foster carers are paid both a fee and an age related allowance (ARA). Foster carers are paid weekly in arrears directly into a bank or building society account. This document is a summary of the scheme and a more detailed guide is provided in the Foster Carer Handbook.

What is the fee?

Fees are in recognition of the complexity and sensitivity required to foster children and young people. It is also in recognition of the professional nature of the job and the high expectations the council has of its foster carers.

The scheme is designed to recognise the training, skill and experience which foster carers bring to the task and is divided into different bands. Each band in the scheme reflects an increasing level of skill and experience. Fees are based on three factors;

- ▶ the **number** of children a foster carer is approved and available for
- ▶ the **maximum** age that a foster carer is approved and available for
- ▶ the **band** carers are in.

How much is the fee?

FEE: Age 0 to 17 years

Band	1 child	2 children	3 children
Band 1	£161	£257	£353
Band 2	£205	£301	£397
Band 3	£236	£332	£428

Age related allowance

Age	Weekly amount	Birthday/ Xmas	Holiday
Pre-Primary (0-3)	£130	£130	£260
Primary (4-10)	£143	£143	£286
Secondary (11-15)	£164	£164	£328
Secondary (16-17)	£191	£191	£382

The main allowance is to cover all food, clothing, pocket money, heating and other utilities, cooking, toiletries, personal care needs, UK telephone calls, travel, holidays, entertainment and other normal day to day expenses involved in caring for any child.

For more information call **01454 866423**
or visit www.southglos.gov.uk/fostering

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Are there any additional allowances?

- ▶ **Child's holiday:** Fostered children and young people should be included in the foster carers' family holiday arrangements if the child is with the carer at the time of planning the holiday and it is expected that the child will still be with them at the time of the holiday. A payment equal to two weeks foster care allowance will be paid to carers during the year to cover this.
- ▶ **Initial clothing:** An initial payment for clothing will be paid on placement if the child has no clothing or only very minimal clothing.
- ▶ **Christmas/birthday:** An age related Christmas/festival and birthday allowance is paid for each child in placement.
- ▶ **Equipment:** Essential equipment is supplied for the age range of the child that the carers are approved for e.g. car seat, safety gates etc.

What if I do not have a placement?

A retainer will be paid for vacant placements for carers approved for the age range 11- 18. The retainer will be paid for 28 days after a placement is vacant.

There is an expectation that foster carers might be asked to provide additional support to other carers or children during this time - for up to 15 hours per week. (This is based on fee, not ARA.)

Are there any other financial benefits?

All carers will be entitled to 14 nights per annum paid break from fostering per year. This allowance is for carers and is not based on the number of children placed. The 14 nights entitlement is based on full year placements and will be calculated on a pro rata basis for shorter placements.

Are these allowances taxable?

Currently the fostering allowance is not taxable unless you are receiving more than the individual limit set by the Inland Revenue.

You will need to seek advice from your local Inland Revenue tax office on how best to calculate and pay your tax, to do this you can visit the website:

www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk

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