

New fostering payments scheme

The scheme is a fee per bed scheme based on approval categories of 0-18 with a clear matching preference. Carers are only paid the fee and allowance when there are children in placement; vacant beds are not paid for unless there is a clear justifiable and time limited reason as to why we would pay for a vacant bed (this is only applicable in exceptional circumstances and dependent on the needs of the existing child in placement and not the needs of the carers). A retainer of up to 50% of the (additional) fee will be paid if we are holding a bed for another child.

To provide new carers with some financial reassurance they will receive half of their fee for the first 3 months they are available to foster, when they don't have a placement.

When a child moves from a foster placement, the carer will receive half of the fee related to that placement for 2 weeks if they have a vacancy, and are available to foster. If the carer turns down what is considered to be a well matched placement within that 2 week period, the fee associated to that placement will be stopped. If the carer has another placement within the 2 week period, the payment associated with the vacancy will stop and they will begin receiving a fee related to the new placement.

Level	Weekly fee 0 children**	Weekly fee 1 child	Fee 2 children	Fee 3 children	Fee 4 children
Standard		£85.00	£102.00	£119.00	£154.70
Generic (newly approved mainstream foster carers)		£200	£300	£400	£500*
Advanced		£250	£400	£600	£750*
Specialist	£500**	£600**	£700**	£800**	£900**

* In the exceptional circumstances where foster carers have more than 4 children placed with them, generic carers will receive an additional £100.00 per child and advanced carers an additional £150.00 per child.

** Mockingbird carers are the only carers who will receive this.

Carers who do not complete the Training, Support and Development standards portfolio within timescales will have their fee level reviewed.

Child's allowance

Age of child	Weekly rate
0-4	£135
5-10	£150
11-15	£180
16+	£215

From the child's allowance, all expenses should be met; this includes travel, clothing, food, household contribution, pocket money, savings etc. Foster carers are expected to pay the following for pocket money and savings from the allowance.

Age	Pocket money weekly	Long term savings weekly
0-4	nil	£4
5-10	£3	£5
11-15	£5	£7
16-17	£10	£10

Additional payments

In addition to this, Walsall will pay two weeks' allowance for holidays per child. Foster carers should not expect any further payments towards taking a child on holiday; a further payment towards a holiday would only be paid in very exceptional circumstances.

Foster carers will receive a birthday allowance and a festival allowance for each child placed per year. The rates are as follows.

Age	Birthday	Festival annually
0-4	£100	£100
5-10	£110	£110
11-15	£150	£150
16-17	£180	£180

Mileage rates – the amount and the criteria will stay the same as they are with our current scheme (36.9p per mile; 13.3p per mile excess).