

Southampton City Council Fostering Service Allowances and Skills Level Fees (From December 2023)

Weekly Allowance

Foster carers are not employed, but receive a Weekly Allowance to cover the day-to-day costs of caring for a child or young person, such as clothing, food, some travel, leisure activities and contribution towards the general household costs – gas, electricity, water etc. Foster carers are also able to claim other expenses for the child or young person, which will be explained during the assessment process.

All Southampton City Council approved foster carers begin their fostering journey receiving the Weekly Allowance per foster child in placement, dependent on the age of the child **and** the Level 1 allowance (further details below).

Age	Weekly Allowance
0-4	£171.00
5-10	£195.00
11-15	£229.53
16+	£279.21

Skills Level / Professional Fee Scheme

Our Skills Level / Professional Fee Scheme is a financial remuneration scheme based on approved foster carers having the opportunity to enhance their skills through gaining extra fostering experience and knowledge. There are certain expectations which need to be met to reach these levels and this can be achieved through relevant and on-going training and providing care to children and young people with more complex needs.

In some circumstances, people being assessed as foster carers may have transferable professional experience, skills, knowledge or training which is relevant to the fostering role. This can be considered during the assessment process, and it may be decided that the prospective foster carer can begin their fostering with Southampton City Council with a higher Skills Level/Professional Fee (Level 2 or Level 3). This is particularly relevant for those existing foster carers who wish to transfer to us from another fostering agency.

Under the Skills Level / Professional Fee Scheme, you will receive either Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3 payments **and** the Weekly Allowance (dependent on the age of the child, as per the table above).

NB - The Weekly Allowance and Skills Level / Professional Fee are only paid when children are in placement.

Level 1

In addition to the Weekly Allowance in the table above, newly qualified Level 1 foster carers will receive:

- A Skills Level/Professional Fee of £78.52 – this is payable for each child in placement and is paid weekly
- A Household Fee of £35.34 – this is paid weekly when a child or children are in placement – it is not paid per child

Level 2

In addition to the Weekly Allowance in the table above, Level 2 foster carers will receive:

- A Skills Level/Professional Fee of £157.04 – this is payable for each child in placement and is paid weekly
- A Household Fee of £70.69 – this is paid weekly when a child or children are in placement – it is not paid per child

Level 3

In addition to the Weekly Allowance in the table above, Level 3 foster carers will receive:

- A Skills Level/Professional Fee of £396.95 – this is payable for each child in placement and is paid weekly

Parent and Child

Parent and Child foster carers will receive:

- A Skills Level/Professional Fee of £834.98. This is paid weekly.

There is a retainer fee of £384.77. This is paid weekly.

If a parent leaves, the Parent and Child Foster Family receive £555.77. This is paid weekly.

Respite

Respite foster carers receive the equivalent of the Weekly Allowance per night of stay. Level 1 to 3 foster carers also receive the equivalent of Skills Level/Professional Fee and Household Fee.

Emergency Placements

A one-off payment of £100 will be made for emergency placements. This payment is in recognition that in some cases, when children and young people are placed in an emergency, there are likely to be additional costs incurred up front. This payment is not per child.

Emergency placements are defined as being placements happening on the same day the foster carer is approached by the Placements Team about the child or children and agrees to take the placement, or whereby a foster carer takes a placement via the Emergency Duty Team; out of usual office hours, over a weekend or on a bank holiday.

Emergency payments are not applicable for day care or where the child is being placed for a short period of respite care.

Day Care

£7 per hour, maximum of £42 per day.

Fostering allowances (both the Weekly Allowance and the Skills Level/Professional Fee) cease when a young person reaches 18 years of age or is no longer looked after by the Local Authority. However, under the Care Leaver's legislation, it may be possible for some payments to continue until the young person reaches 21 years, or 24 years if education is continuing, under the Staying Put scheme.

If you have any questions about fostering allowances or would like to talk to someone about fostering with Southampton City Council, please call us on 0800 5 191818 or email fostering@southampton.gov.uk.