



Title/Status-	POLICY- Finance Arrangements for Children in Care or Care Leavers
New Document or Revised	Revised
Responsible Head of Service	Children In Care
Review Due Date	April 2025

**Leicestershire Procedure for POLICY- Finance Arrangements for Children in Care or Care Leavers**

**Applies to Children in particular circumstances**

**Finance arrangements  
for Children in Care or  
Care Leavers  
(not in foster care or  
residential care)**

**April 2024**

Children & Family Services  
Children's Social Care



## Children In Care Service

### Introduction

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and the Transitions into Adulthood guidance made Children's Services financially responsible for all young people leaving care until their 18th birthday and to offer support and advice until the age of 25 to eligible care leavers. The Children & Social Work Act 2017 extended this duty up to 25 for all care leavers who require a continued service.

**The financial arrangements outlined in this document are intended to be used as a guide.**

**Individual circumstances should always be taken into account when making decisions about a young person's finances and should also be identified in the young person's Pathway Plan.**

The Children in Care service is aspirational for all care leavers and wants to enable young people to reach their full potential. To support this aim financial assistance will continue to be offered to young people after turn 18 from one of the following groups:

- Young people at university or on other higher education courses
- Young people in further education or training
- Young people in post-18 funded supported lodgings placements
- Young people who are 'Staying Put' with their foster carers after the age of 18 (under the Children & Families Act 2014).
- Young people with moderate learning difficulties or challenging behaviour who are struggling with the move to independence.
- Unaccompanied young people who have not received a decision on their asylum application.



**Contents**

**Young people aged 16 and 17** ..... 5

1. Personal allowance payments to 16/17 year olds ..... 5

1.1 No meals provided, young person pays own bills ..... 6

1.2 Supported Lodgings placement with all meals provided ..... 6

1.3 Supported Lodgings with no meals provided ..... 7

2. Bank Account..... 7

3. Payments of Allowances ..... 7

4. Young People who are Not in Education, Employment or Training..... 8

5. Education, Employment and Training ..... 9

6. Rent or Board Contribution ..... 9

7. 16 to 19 Bursary Fund ..... 9

8. Young People in unpaid training (not apprenticeships)..... 10

9. Interview Clothing ..... 10

10. 16 or 17 year old young people in employment or paid training (e.g. apprenticeships) ..... 10

11. Council Tax..... 10

12. Young People in Custody ..... 10

13. Young People Placed with their Parents..... 11

14. Young Parents ..... 11

15. Disabled Young People..... 11

**Young people aged 18 - 21** ..... 12

16. Young People in Further Education or Training aged 18 - 21 ..... 11

17. Apprenticeships..... 13

18. Utility Bills ..... 13

19. Claiming benefits: Council Tax & Housing Element of Universal Credit ... 13

20. Claiming benefits: earnings replacement benefits ..... 14

21. Paying a personal allowance ..... 14

22. Accommodation Costs ..... 15

23. Young people in University ..... 15

24. Disabled Young People ..... 15

25. Young People in Employment..... 15

26. Young People in Custody ..... 17

**Other support for care leavers of any age**..... 17

27. Social, Cultural & Leisure Activities ..... 17

28. Alternative Funding..... 17

29. Leaving Care Grant ..... 17

30. TV Licence..... 17

31. Clothing ..... 18

32. Christmas Allowance ..... 18

33. Birthday Allowances ..... 18

34. Holidays..... 18

35. Contact Costs ..... 18

36. Health Needs ..... 19

37. Young Parents ..... 19

38. Maternity Grants ..... 19



39.	Child Care Costs.....	19
40.	Emergency Payments.....	19
41.	Young people between the ages of 21 and 25.....	19
42.	Qualifying Care Leavers.....	20
	Appendix 1 Leaving Care Grant items.....	21



## Young People aged 16 and 17

### 1. Personal allowance (PA) payments to 16/17 year olds

The following tables outline what personal allowances should be paid to young people under the age of 18 and not living in foster care or residential care, depending on their circumstances.

In principle, the standard amount is matched to the Universal Credit (income support/jobseekers allowance) amount for a single person under the age of 25. This is currently £311.68 per month, the weekly PA amount paid will therefore be £71.93 per week.

#### Flat-rate amounts

In 2024/25 our standard full personal allowance (PA) amount is £71.93 a week.

For those who live in supported lodgings with food provided, the expectation is that £30 of their PA goes to the supported lodging provider, which also covers bills.

For children under the age of 18 who are in our care, we do not expect them to pay for bills.

#### Disregards

In recognition of the need for a reward for young people who are in education, training or employment we will not expect them to contribute to their utility bills if they live in semi-independent provision.



### 1.1 No meals provided, 16+ semi-independent accommodation

	Not in Education, Employment & Training (NEET)	In Education or Training	In Employment
Income received direct by young person	£71.93	£71.93 + Bursary payment or payment in kind from college	Means tested (see guidance)
Usual personal Allowance paid by Children in Care Service	£71.93	£71.93	Means tested (see guidance)
Rent & Bills Contribution (See guidance)	Rent and bills paid by CIC service.	Rent and bills paid by CIC service.	Rent and bills paid for by CIC service.
Net personal allowance given to young person	£	£71.93 plus education bursary	Means tested (see guidance)
Total received in hand by young person	£71.93	£71.93	Means tested (see guidance)

### 1.2 Supported Lodgings placement with all meals provided

	NEET	Education or Training	Employment
Income received direct by young person	£71.93	£71.93 + Bursary payment or payment in kind from college	Variable
Usual personal Allowance paid by Children in Care Service	£71.93	£71.93	Means tested (see guidance)
Rent & Bills Contribution (See guidance)	£30	£18 for food	£18 for food
Net personal allowance given to young person	£30	£53.93	Means tested (see guidance)
Total received in hand by young person	£41.93	£53.93 + bursary	Means tested (see guidance)



### 1.3 Supported Lodgings with no meals provided

	NEET	Education Training or	Employment
Income received direct by young person	£71.93	£71.93 + Bursary payment or payment in kind from college	Means tested (see guidance)
Usual personal Allowance paid by Children in Care Service	£71.93	£71.93	Means tested (see guidance)
Rent, bills & meals Contribution (See guidance)	£0	£0	£0
Net personal allowance given to young person	£71.93	£71.93	Means tested (see guidance)
Total received in hand by young person	£71.93	£71.93 + Bursary payment	Means tested (see guidance)

## 2. Bank Account

Young people should be encouraged to open their own bank account and develop the skills to manage their own finances. Children in Care workers shall advise young people on how to manage their account. Financial assistance should be channeled through a young person's bank account wherever possible.

## 3. Payments of Allowances

In most cases payments will be made directly into a young person's bank account; however, consideration will be given to individual circumstances on how and where allowances are received. If a young person is not at the stage where they can manage their money safely then it might be necessary to give a portion to their support worker to make sure food and other essentials are purchased. The PA may also be split up into 2 or more amounts a week to help the young person to budget.

Young people in foster or residential care receive a Religious Festival Allowance (see 31 below for details) from their carer. Young people who have left care or who live in supported lodgings are entitled to receive the following in the form of vouchers up until they are 21:

- under 18 £100
- over 18 £100

Young people can request the Religious Festival Allowance is paid instead for Christmas, Eid, Diwali or another religious festival of their choosing. This allowance is only given for one festival in the year.

All young people who have left care are entitled to the following birthday allowances in the form of a cheque or a voucher:

- 17<sup>th</sup> birthday £50
- 18<sup>th</sup> birthday £50

On special birthdays, for example 18 and 21, there is an expectation a young person not in foster care or residential care is taken for a special meal or enabled to go for a special meal/event with a significant other.

#### **4. Young People who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)**

Payments to young people are in line with nationally agreed levels set by the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP), currently £71.93 per week to make sure they can access the money more easily.

Young people not engaged in education, training, or employment, are not entitled to any additional financial assistance once they have reached 18, apart from the period where they are waiting for their universal credit claim to be processed.

Young people in this situation will be helped to claim all the appropriate benefits. We have a protocol with the DWP that allows us to begin this process one month before they turn 18 and to have a meeting with a DWP work coach so they understand the expectations around their job search. The claim itself cannot be started until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

At 18, once evidence is provided that they have successfully made a claim, and whilst they are waiting to have their benefits processed, the young person will be provided with financial support until their Universal Credit is in payment (this will usually take 5-6 weeks) from the date of their 18th birthday at the weekly universal rate as set by the DWP (currently £71.93 per week). After this period, we will need evidence as to why Universal Credit is not in payment before any additional PA payments are considered. We will encourage them to not seek an advanced payment for this period, as claiming this would put them immediately into debt.

The Children in Care Service will continue to act as good parents, and requests for emergency payments will continue to be considered on an individual basis. The Care Leaver Team Manager will decide whether a direct payment is made, or a food parcel is given.



Unaccompanied young people over 18 who haven't received a decision on their asylum application from the Home Office will receive financial support from the Children in Care Service (if they have an in-time application or appeal in place) until they have been given a decision.

If they receive a positive decision, then they will become entitled to access welfare benefits and financial support from Children's Services will cease.

Those young people that become ARE (Appeal Rights Exhausted) have a negative decision which cannot be appealed again-will have 90 days during which to apply through Migrant Help for sect 4 assistance- financial support and accommodation. They will be supported through the Home Office. \*\*

\*\*Please note the law in this area is complex and subject to change please always seek the advice of a specialist.

## **5. Education, Employment and Training**

16 or 17-year-old young people who are looked after or care leavers in education or training will receive a personal allowance and will not be expected to pay bills. In addition, they may be entitled to the following:

- travel allowance
- utility bills paid
- financial assistance toward clothing or equipment or other associated costs of their course

## **6. Rent or Board Contribution**

16 and 17-year old's who are looked after or care leavers are not expected to contribute towards their rent and board except in supported lodgings where all food and bills are paid and therefore the young person will receive a reduced personal allowance.

## **7. 16 to 19 Bursary Fund**

Those most in need, such as those in care, care leavers or those claiming universal credit are guaranteed a bursary of £1,200 a year. The responsibility for administering and paying the bursary lies with the colleges. The colleges may give cash or payment in kind such as stationery or lunch vouchers.

Young people who are not entitled to the bursary, either due to the nature of their course or due to their immigration status will receive similar financial incentives to attend education or training up until they are 18. The expectations for these young people remain the same in terms of attendance and progress - this will be monitored by their social worker and personal advisor.

## **8. Young People in unpaid training (not apprenticeships)**

16 or 17-year-old young people on training courses will get the same financial support from the Children in Care Service as someone in education in relation to personal allowance, bills, clothing and equipment. If a young person receives assistance towards travel expenses from their training provider, they will not be entitled to this from the Children in Care Service. The social worker/personal advisor will check a young person's attendance on a regular to basis.

## **9. Interview Clothing/Clothing**

Young people can be supported to get interview clothing. Young people entering care at 16/17 may need clothing. Unlike those in foster care or residential care there is not a set amount so you will work with your PA/Social worker to check you have what you need, and this is regularly reviewed as part of your general care.

## **10. 16 or 17-year-old young people in employment or paid training (e.g. apprenticeships)**

Their entitlement to a personal allowance will be means tested.

Any earnings that a young person has will be taken into account when calculating if they are still entitled to receive any PA. In line with how Universal Credit treats income 55% of any earnings will be taken into account and this amount taken off the maximum payable PA of £71.93 per week. This is to match the experience they will have if/when claiming benefit in their own right when they are over 18 whilst maintaining an incentive to work.

For example, if a young person earns £50 per week then they will have £27.50 (55% of £50) taken off their PA payment so they would receive £44.43 per week, i.e £71.93 - £27.50. If they earn £80 per week they will have £44.00 (55% of £80) taken off their PA so would receive £27.93 (i.e. £71.93-£44.00)

This will mean that if a young person earns over £130.78 per week they will no longer be entitled to receive any PA.

## **11. Council Tax**

16/17-year-olds are not liable for council tax and should not be charged within Leicestershire.

## **12. Young People in Custody**

16/17-year-old's in custody will receive no personal allowance. Whilst in custody they will receive £10 per month in the form of a postal order. Young people in custody are encouraged to engage in education and training offered by the prison to earn extra money.

Requests for additional financial assistance for personal needs including clothing will be based on assessed need.

### **13. Young People Placed with their Parents**

If a young person is the subject of 'Placement with Parent Regulations' and therefore at home and the parent(s) or carer(s) are working, then no long-term payments will be made to the young person. If there is a period of time while their parents are waiting to access benefits in this situation, a discretionary short-term payment will be considered.

### **14. Young Parents**

16/17-year-old young people who are parents (and responsible for the child for benefit purposes) are eligible to claim Universal Credit and will be supported to do so.

Pregnant women who receive Universal Credit are entitled to a prepaid payment card under the Healthy Start scheme for milk, fresh fruit and vegetables. The card is credited with £4.25 a week and can be obtained through a healthcare professional such as a midwife.

Therefore, if they receive PA rather than Universal Credit the Children in Care Service will give pregnant care leavers an £18.42 per month in food vouchers from their 10th week of pregnancy (i.e. the equivalent to what they would have been entitled to if they could claim under the Healthy Start Scheme).

### **15. Disabled young people**

Young people with disabilities may already be claiming Disability Living Allowance once they turn 16. It is possible that before they are 18 this will be reviewed, and they will be re-assessed for Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

Disability benefits are not means tested and can be claimed on top of whatever PA arrangement exists for the young person.

Young people being supported in a hospital setting and considered looked after will be supported as part of an assessment. The setting will not mean they are excluded from the same support as all other young people, but we are minded to the fact that they may need less financial support whilst supported through health services.

## **Young People aged 18 - 21**

This policy applies to former relevant care leavers. For details of the support offered to qualifying care leavers, please see section 41.

### **16. Young People in Further Education or Training aged 18 - 21**

Young people undertaking a recognised full-time education or training course may continue to receive financial support as an incentive payment to top up their income. Children in Care workers will ensure the young person is in receipt of any welfare benefit entitlements or education grants they are entitled to before financial support is considered.

Financial support **may** include; personal allowance, rent, help with utility bills, cost of travel, books, clothing and equipment, and other costs associated with a course.

The detail of the financial support package is to be agreed by the Personal Advisor in conjunction with the team manager.

This support will continue until either:

- The end of the academic year a young person reaches 25
  - or
  - A young person finishes their course
- whichever is the earliest.

The Personal Advisor will help the young person to apply and access grants from the college or training provider (or other sources such as the Prince's Trust) to obtain equipment or clothing to support their learning.

An 18-year-old care leaver on a further education course over 12 hours per week and on some training courses will be entitled to welfare benefits until they reach the age of 21 (and beyond in some limited circumstances) as long as they have no other income apart from their bursary. The Personal Advisor worker will advise and assist a young person to access the appropriate benefits.

The benefits system is likely to treat a young person as still in education during the holidays (Christmas, Easter and summer vacation), so the normal benefit rules will continue to apply. Young people over the age of 20 who are not entitled to benefits whilst at college are unlikely to qualify during the holidays, apart from the final summer vacation following the end of their course – young people in this situation should be encouraged to find work during the holidays.

If a young person chooses to undertake part time work whilst on a college course they have to be aware it could affect their benefit entitlements. If unsure, young people should consult with their Personal Advisor.

## 17. Apprentices

Over the last few years the Government has encouraged the development of apprenticeship schemes through the public and private sector. Young people are encouraged through the payment of a training wage to work within the areas they wish to become a career path.

Within Leicestershire we encourage the young people we work with to be engaged in education, training and employment. We intend that young people over the age of 18 are supported to enable them not to be worse off should they choose to take up the opportunity of an apprenticeship.

The minimum wage for an apprenticeship is £6.40 per hour for the first year of their apprenticeship and increases to minimum wage rates after this. The young people can also claim Universal Credit to be paid the Housing Element as they have a low income. All young people on a scheme should have their finances looked at by their Personal Advisor to make sure they are not worse off than someone who works a minimum wage job.

We will pay the equivalent of the bursary a young person would get in college, which is up to £1200 a year. For young people in education the colleges divide the annual figure by 38 (which is the number of weeks spent at college) and pay £32 for each of the 38 weeks spent at college.

### **18. Utility Bills**

Whilst a young person over the age of 18 remains in education, apprenticeship or training they may receive up to £10.00 per week contribution from the Children in Care Service to help them pay toward their electricity and gas bills. Children in Care workers will use their discretion to decide how much to pay, and they will help these young people to set up methods for paying their bills in the most appropriate way for their circumstances.

### **19. Claiming benefits: Council Tax & Housing Element of Universal Credit (previously Housing Benefit)**

Care Leavers are usually exempt from having to pay Council Tax if they live in Leicestershire and are between the ages of 18-25. They will usually need to complete a form from their district council to claim the exemption. If Care Leavers live outside Leicestershire whether they receive help with their council tax is dependent on that local authority's policy. Therefore, in many cases they will be liable to pay council tax and should be advised to claim the necessary Council Tax Support.

Rent costs are now usually paid as part of the young person's Universal Credit as a Housing Element. This amount of rent will be paid to the young person not directly to the landlord, unless this is requested, so the young person needs to be made aware about their responsibility to pay rent. In most cases it is advisable to request the Housing Element is paid directly to the landlord and this should automatically be agreed where the young person is a care leaver.

Full time students cannot usually get Housing Element, but care leavers under 21 years old who are studying full time at a standard below degree level should be able to claim as long as they have no other income. Part time students with no other income may be able to claim at any age. The definition of full or part time varies, but generally anything over 16 hours a week is full time and less than 12 hours is part time. The young

person's individual learning agreement is key to determining the full or part time status. Young people who are disabled should be able to claim regardless of their full or part time status.

## 20. Claiming benefits: earnings replacement benefits.

We have high expectations for our young people and we hope that when they reach age 18 they will be able to find a job that pays them a good wage to live on. In the meantime, they might have to claim benefits. Young people should be able to claim Universal Credit if they are:

- Looking for work
- Too ill or disabled to work but they will need to provide a fit note (the new name for a sick note) from their GP
- At college doing a non-advanced course (i.e. below degree level standard) and not living with their parents or anyone else acting in place of their parents

## 21. Paying a personal allowance

We **will** pay a personal allowance when:

- The young person has just turned 18 *and*
- Has made a valid claim to benefits *and*
- The claim has not been paid yet

It can take 5-6 weeks for benefits to be paid if the correct procedure has been followed. We can pay up to 5-6 weeks' personal allowance but after this period we will need evidence as to why Universal Credit is not in payment before any additional PA payments are considered.

The amount of personal allowance will be the same as the benefit itself (currently £71.93 per week) (see paragraph 1).

We **will not** pay a personal allowance when the young person

- Has not done everything they need to do to make a benefit claim
- Has been sanctioned. This is because a sanction is generally the young person has not done what is expected of them as claimants, i.e. look for work. If we were to pay, then the sanction would have no effect.

There will always be exceptional circumstances, so we will take these into account. In particular we will consider cases where the young person has done everything possible to secure an income but they are being delayed by another Government department, for example the Home Office.

## **22. Accommodation Costs**

If a young person is not entitled to the Housing Element of Universal Credit whilst undertaking an education or training course, the Care Leaver Team will help toward rent costs. Rent will be paid up to a maximum of the local housing allowance rates for the area the young person lives in. These are currently £538.50 per month for a one bedroom flat and up to £394.33 per month for shared accommodation in Leicestershire.

## **23. Young people in University**

Young people will be encouraged to apply for all available loans and grants for them to be able to attend university. Care leavers are entitled to a maintenance grant which they do not have to repay. They will need to apply for loans for their fees and accommodation costs. The university will also have a bursary scheme which will enable students to gain further financial support.

Generally the Children in Care Service will not fund PHD or Masters Courses as these tend to be completed whilst people are at work. The request made will be looked at on an individual basis.

The Children in Care service will pay a £4000 bursary which will be paid in 4 payments throughout the academic year. The level of any other further support will be assessed through the pathway plan.

The Children in Care service will support students in identifying the appropriate accommodation for the duration of their course as well as vacations. This may involve ensuring a young person has the resources to fund accommodation over the three holiday periods (summer, Easter and Christmas) period or provide the accommodation.

## **24. Disabled Young People**

Young people who are disabled and who have substantial or critical needs will be assessed by the Transitions Team in the year before they turn 18. At 18 they may be eligible for financial and housing support by adult services, either in their own tenancy or in supported accommodation provided by adult services.

## **25. Young People in Employment**

Young people over 18 who are working are not entitled to financial support from the Children in Care Service. They may be entitled to in-work benefits and can seek advice on this from their Personal Advisor.

## Working young people in Staying Put/ Supported Lodgings

Young people in staying put accommodation are expected to make contributions towards their rent. This mirrors the situation they are going to face when they live independently and helps them to understand the financial obligations they will have in the future. Where the young person earns over £100 per week they are expected to make a payment to their staying put/supported lodgings provider of £25 per week (£108.33 per month). LCC will then make a reduced payment to the provider to mirror this amount

Where the young person is in Full-Time education, is unable to work due to ill health, or is looking for work they will be assisted to claim Universal Credit (UC) by their Personal Advisor. UC includes a payment towards rent and the young person will need to claim this. They will need to provide their staying put rental agreement to UC and to request that rent payments are made directly to LCC. LCC will speak to the DWP to get rental payments paid direct to LCC. If the UC Housing Element rental payment is paid to the young person they will need to pay this to LCC.

When the young person is working they may still be entitled to UC depending on the level of their wages. If they are entitled to UC they are again expected to inform UC of their rental agreement and request direct payments of their UC Housing Element towards this are made to LCC.

If the young person is at university, they will need to make their rent payments from their student finance (i.e. maintenance loan) for their university accommodation. Where they are in university accommodation for part of the year and at their Staying Put Placement during the holidays the care leavers team will pay for the Summer, Christmas and Easter breaks.

Where the young person is in university accommodation for part of the year and at their Staying Put Placement during the holidays the care leavers team will pay for the Summer, Christmas and Easter breaks directly to the young person. The young person will need to make their rent payments for their university accommodation. from their student finance (i.e. maintenance loan). No holiday allowances are payable if they choose to go on holiday with carers.

The Staying Put or Supported Lodging carer will be paid by LCC finance dept for up to 15 weeks pro rata for non term time placement. If the young person goes to a local University and remains with their carer full-time then the standard allowances will be paid to the Staying Put or Supported Lodging carers.

The staying put provider will always have the rental element paid to them by LCC.



## 26. Young People in Custody

Young people over 18 will continue to receive £10 per month postal order until they turn 21. Upon release from custody young people, in conjunction with the Youth Offending or Probation Service, can be given assistance with clothing, emergency payments and help with claiming benefits. They will also be given PA at the rate of £71.93 if they have a pending claim.

## Other Support for Care Leavers up to 25

### 27. Social, Cultural & Leisure Activities

Young people are encouraged to take up social, cultural and leisure opportunities and where appropriate apply for financial support following discussion with their Personal Advisor.

### 28. Alternative Funding

Personal Advisors need to ensure all financial avenues have been explored when developing a financial package of support for a young person by:

- applying for education grants;
- exploring whether an education or training provider or employer provides financial assistance toward clothing, equipment, travel or child care costs;
- applying for charitable funds via Charity Link;
- and by maximising a young person's welfare benefit entitlements.

### 29. Leaving Care Grant

This is a discretionary grant which is used for helping a young person to set up a home. The current grant is set at £3000. This is available to Young People who have turned 18 from April 2023. Young people will work with their Personal Advisor to identify their needs for their new accommodation to ensure they have a tenancy which meets their needs. (see appendix 1)

### 30. TV License

The Children in Care Service will purchase a young person's **first** TV license out of their Leaving Care Grant. Young people will be helped to set up an appropriate payment plan to save up for their next TV license. Young people need to be reminded to notify the TV licensing authority when they change address.



### **31. Clothing**

Young people can make requests for financial assistance toward clothing but they are not entitled to a regular clothing grant. Decisions by team managers to grant requests will be based on need and positive life choices. The Care Leaver Team expects that young people will leave care adequately equipped with clothing and will have had assistance to budget their clothing allowance whilst they were in care.

### **32. Religious Festival Allowance**

Young people in foster or residential care receive a Religious Festival Allowance from their carer. Young people who have left care or who live in supported lodgings or are entitled to receive the following in the form of vouchers up until they are 21:

- under 18 £100
- over 18 £100

Young people can request the Religious Festival Allowance is paid for Christmas, Eid, Diwali or for another religious festival of their choosing. This allowance is only given for one festival in the year.

### **33. Birthday Allowances**

All young people who have left care are entitled to the following birthday allowances in the form of a cheque or a voucher:

- 17<sup>th</sup> birthday £50
- 18<sup>th</sup> birthday £50
- 19<sup>th</sup> birthday £50
- 20<sup>th</sup> birthday £50
- 21<sup>st</sup> birthday £50

On special birthdays, for example 18 and 21, there is an expectation a young person not in foster care or residential care is taken for a special meal or enabled to go for a special meal/event with a significant other.

### **34. Holidays**

Young people who have left care are not entitled to a holiday allowance. However, the team manager has discretion to reward some young people for making positive life choices and in some cases this reward might be financial support toward a college or university trip.

### **35. Contact Costs**

Contact with family members, friends or significant others will be financially supported whenever deemed appropriate following discussion between a young person and their Children in Care worker and as outlined in their Pathway Plan.

### **36. Health Needs**

Reasonable financial requests which support a young person to maintain their health will be granted. Requests for extra help, for example toward the cost of glasses on top of any benefit entitlements, will be considered by the team manager. Specific needs which incur additional cost to a young person such as specialist hair care or skin care products will also be considered. If these are disability related, then before this is agreed the Personal Advisor will consider if they care leaver could apply for a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) to cover these costs.

### **37. Young Parents**

Pregnant women who receive Universal Credit are entitled to Healthy Start vouchers for milk, fresh fruit and vegetables. The vouchers are worth £4.25 a week and can be obtained through a healthcare professional such as a midwife.

### **38. Maternity Grants**

Pregnant young women who have left care and receive universal credit are eligible to apply for a Sure Start Maternity Grant (SSMG) from the DWP; universal credit needs to be in payment on the date of the SSMG claim, effectively meaning that a claim can only be made once the baby is born.

### **39. Child Care Costs**

Young parents are entitled to apply for a Care to Learn grant to help with nursery fees if they are intending to undertake a full or part time college or training course. In some circumstances the Children in Care Service will contribute toward child care costs such as nursery fees if this grant is unavailable; this must be agreed between the Personal Advisor and the team manager

### **40. Emergency Payments**

Requests for emergency payments are considered on an individual basis. The Children in Care team manager will decide whether a cash payment is made, or a food parcel is given.

### **41. Young people between the ages of 21 and 25**

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 states that care leavers now have a right to return to their local authority over the age of 21 and before the age of 25.

If a care leaver returns for support, then an assessment will take place and a pathway plan completed to ensure that young people are assisted to apply for support from all sources and maximize the potential for funding.



This finance policy applies to those who return for a service after 21, with the exception of Christmas and birthday money.

## A Qualifying Care Leavers

The financial offer for qualifying care leavers is not the same as those for former relevant care leavers.

Any financial support after the age of 18 is discretionary and will be decided after a pathway assessment. The exception to this is that if the young person is studying away from home, on a full-time course, we would provide or pay for accommodation during the academic holidays.

Regarding the discretion:

- For instance, the Care Leaver Team may find the young person somewhere to live in exceptional circumstances they need directly or, in exceptional circumstances, by giving you cash if your education and welfare needs require it
- Give you a grant to pay for expenses related to education, training and work needs up to the age of 25
- Contribute to living expenses related with your education and training, up to the age of 25.



## Appendix 1- Leaving Care Grant items

Below are examples of items that may be purchased through the Leaving Care Grant. This is not an exhaustive list and other items can be considered in discussion with the PA and their team manager. With the support of the PA items will be considered for purchase which are cost effective and not of excessive cost.

<b><u>KITCHEN</u></b>	<b><u>BEDROOM</u></b>
Cooker	Bed and mattress
Fridge	Bedding
Saucepans/frying pans	Wardrobe
Casseroles/baking dishes	Chest of drawers
Kettle	Alarm clock/radio
Cutlery	Heater
Crockery/glasses/mugs/plates	<b><u>BATHROOM</u></b>
Kitchen knives/utensils	Towels
Cleaning Equipment	Medicine Cabinet
Vacuum Cleaner	<b><u>GENERAL</u></b>
Iron and ironing board	Floor covering for rooms
Washing machine ( if no launderette locally)	Curtains/blinds for rooms
Toaster	<b><u>OTHER ITEMS</u></b> (as agreed)
Microwave	
<b><u>LIVING ROOM</u></b>	
Television and TV License	
Suite/easy chairs	
Dining table and chairs	
Fire/heater	